MARIA;

OR,

THE HOLLANDERS

BY

LOUIS BUONAPARTE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE

TO THE

TRANSLATION.

It is known that M. Louis Buonaparte, after sustaining, in Holland, for a short period, during the recent convulsions of Europe, the sovereign dignity, descended, in the year 1810, under circumstances highly honourable to his personal character, from the throne on which he had been placed by French usurpation, and withdrew himself into Bohemia, and into certain parts of Austrian Poland.

It is probable that the work before us was the produce of the leisure ensuing upon this abdication. The first edition,

under the title of *Marie, ou les Peines de l'Amour*, was printed at Gratz, in the year 1812. Of that edition, a reprint appeared in Paris, but, from whatever cause, not before the beginning of the year 1814. In the interim, the author had made several alterations in his work, changing some of the minor incidents of the story, and consequently suppressing some of his pages, and adding others; and, in the month of June, 1814, he conveyed, by a written paper, dated at Lausanne, in Switzerland, and signed "L. DE ST. LEU," to a particular bookseller in Paris, authority to print, from the original manuscript, with its alterations, a second edition of his book, under the new title of MARIE, OU LES HOLLANDOISES. From this edition, the following translation has been made.

Proceeding from such a source, it is impossible that the little Novel now given to the English public should wholly escape criticism; as it is equally so that it should not command the attention of readers, even from motives independent on its intrinsic merits. The author will be criticised, if not his work.

This Novel is from the pen of a man who, not only was himself yesterday the wearer of a regal crown, but who is a member of a family which but lately threatened to seat itself on all the thrones of Europe. An elder brother has entered, like him, into the walk of literature; but the exploits of Charlemagne, the deliverance of Rome, and the labours of an epic poem, have something not out of analogy with the name of Buonaparte. That we

should receive a Novel from a kindred hand, does not fail to occasion an involuntary emotion of surprize and curiosity. When that Novel is found to avoid every pretence to heroic character, and to confine itself to the display and cultivation of the delights and charities of domestic life, the contrast is complete; and we dwell with interest and irresistible pleasure on the declared, and, as it were, vindicatory sentiment of the writer, when he exclaims, "How deceived are they who believe that the severest sufferings and most insupportable misfortunes depend upon the great affairs and great interests of the world! It is beneath the humble roofs of honest and unfortunate hearts that lie the real sorrows!"*

* Vol. ii.

The domestic situation of the writer, forcing itself, as it does, upon the knowledge of the public, obliges us to follow with additional sympathy the language of a man who is continually exhorting us to value no happiness but domestic happiness—*le bonheur de famille*, and whose pencil pleases itself in delineating the virtues and the attributes of female life, and the pictures of the nursery; who, leaving it to others to paint the war-horse and the cataract, the city, the senate and the landscape, looks for his subjects in the cradle, and traces the smiles, the gestures and the caresses of infancy, and the beauties and the rewards of maternal tenderness. Circumstanced as M. Louis Buonaparte is known to be, we think that we hear rather the husband than the author in such passages as this:

"Ah! how can a wife, she who bears his name, and shares, or ought to share, his lot; how can she ever be entirely effaced from the recollection of an honest man!" These words occur in the first edition, but one of the alterations has led to their suppression in the second.

From the remarks which have just been made, the character of the story of this Novel is sufficiently opened to the reader. What is incidental has afforded a large scope for variety. Holland, France, Italy, Austria and Poland, fall within the observation of the author, and, under some aspects, a still wider portion of Europe.

Considered, as the work necessarily must be, both in the reader's imagination

and in fact, with reference to the real occurrences of the author's life, it will not be generally unacceptable to recal, in this place, the principal outlines of M. Louis Buonaparte's career. The pages which follow will make it of some interest to know, that whatever may have been his degree of distinction, his public employments have been chiefly of a military description. He entered very young into the service, followed his brother Napoleon in all his first campaigns, and early attained to the rank of brigadier-general, and the colonelcy of a regiment of dragoons. In 1803, he was appointed president of the electoral college of the department of the Po. In 1804, he was made a counsellor of state, promoted to the rank of *général-de-division*, and dignified with the title of constable of the

French empire. In 1805, he assisted at his brother's coronation at Turin, and was invested, at the same place, with the office of governor-general of Piedmont. His health obliged him to retire, in the same year, to the waters of St. Amand, in France, whence, returning to Paris, he held, for a short time, the appointment of governor of that city. About the end of November, he went to Holland, in the nominal command of the Army of the North, and was there soon afterward made to assume the kingly government. He had married, in 1802, Mademoiselle de Beauharnois, daughter of Madame de Beauharnois, the wife of Napoleon, and now, by creation of Louis XVIII., to her mother, Duchess of Saint-Leu. He has two sons by this marriage. His separation

from his wife and his kingdom took place nearly at the same moment. His present residence is at Rome, and the Duchess's, at Paris. The reader will be led to recollect, in the course of the following pages, that the author's first place of retreat from Holland, was the baths of Toplitz.

Considered only intrinsically, these volumes have many beauties, and yet it would be easy to dwell largely on their faults. Is it not enough, if it be consented, that such is the respect with which the author, for the most part, inspires us, for himself, his sentiments, and his talents, that where he appears, in our judgment, to become, for a moment, unworthy of either, we regret it

for his sake, and feel it as a personal vexation?

Morality, and a very fervent piety, are large ingredients in this work; yet, even in these parts, individual differences of opinion are capable of supplying food for criticism. At times, the writer descends to the meanest superstitions. It is thus in the use which he makes of pretended *presentiments*, and in the despicable arguments by which he attempts to uphold those dreams of feeble and misguided minds.

What is not less striking, is the peculiarity, that eminently moral as is the intention of the book, and moral as are its repeated inculcations, it is very cer-

MARIA

OR,

THE HOLLANDERS.



LETTER I.

Julius to his friend Adolphus.

"How can one live away from Paris," you exclaim, my dear Parisian; and I, a true Hollander, ask, in return, how can one live away from Holland, away from one's family, while one possesses, as I do, in the most amiable, the most virtuous of sisters, a tender mother and a real friend; while my cousin MARIA, she whom I love, and who has been destined to me from her infancy, dwells under that paternal roof which as yet she has never

left? Oh! my friend, can those, who are unacquainted with these admirable women, justly say they live? No; if they believe themselves happy, it is a false happiness which possesses them. If they are unhappy, they wrongly accuse the world: the world contains true happiness, since Hermacintha and Maria are so able to confer it.

I perceive, nevertheless, one imperfection in my sister. She is inaccessible to love, and will remain so. Lofty, thinking for herself, full of virtue, and of great depth of mind, she will never find one that is worthy of her. In consequence, she is wholly devoted to friendship.

You should know all that my dear parents owed her to the moment of their death, all that Maria and I are indebted to her, to form a just estimate of this passion of great souls. I had yesterday a delightful enjoyment, in listening to the portrait which she painted of my be-

loved. We were alone. I have retained the very words which my sister pronounced, and I have written them down, that I may never forget them.

" My cousin and pupil, Maria," said Hermacintha, " has a beauty angelic like her soul, which discovers itself in every thing. The correctness of her judgment is extraordinary. She has never been a child, to use such an expression ; and the melancholy which is growing in her heart, and which seems to pierce through the sweetness of her countenance, gives her a charm, a tenderness, and an expression, which are unutterable."

They alone, Adolphus, enable me to bear your absence, but still not without pain. When, my dear friend, will there be a termination of it? I have always before my eyes the afflicting moment of your departure. Do you remember that night when we accompanied you to the water side? You tore yourself from my

arms, and from us all, to go on board that melancholy vessel of which the sails were already set. We followed you along the river, and the light of the moon enabled us to distinguish your progress. We heard the noise of the water which the vessel dashed from beneath her bows. Arrived at the *Heemraadshuis*,* we were losing sight of you, and I made my last signs of farewell from that lofty dike, the usual end of our walks, and which now saw me without my friend.

What will become of me without you! you, the companion of my childhood, of my studies, of my walks, and of my conversations! Formerly, others envied our friendship and our fate, and now it is my turn to envy the fate of others. When I meet the young men who come from Utrecht, or from Arnhem, to walk in our vicinity, and in the same places where we so often were, I can no longer

* House of the Council of Dikes.

sustain your absence, and I hasten to Hermacintha and to Maria; but this double rampart is insufficient to keep out sorrow from my heart. How much, then, is a friend! and what felicity if heaven had given me, in you, a brother! Your absence affects me so much the more, as Hermacintha and Maria have banished from between themselves and me that agreeable familiarity which had rendered us so happy, and the loss of which I regret day by day.

I have several times attempted to draw Maria's portrait, but I have never been able to succeed. This is because it is impossible for me to express all which I feel for her, all which she has inspired me with from her infancy. I recollect that which one of your poets has drawn of a Clarissa, perhaps the creature of imagination. I will quote it, and you will not be displeased to meet once more with the natural and beautiful verses in which it is given :

. . . . . Qu'on me trouve un visage
Par la simple nature uniquement paré,
Dont la douceur soit vive, et dont l'air vif soit sage,
Qu'on me le trouve, et j'aimerai.
Ce qui seroit encore bien nécessaire,
Ce seroit un esprit qui pensât finement,
Et qui crut être un esprit ordinaire;
Timide sans sujet, et par là charmant,
Qui ne pût se montrer, ni se cacher sans plaire;
Qu'on me le trouve, et je deviens amant.
. . . .
. . . .

Je voudrois bien encore un cœur plein de droiture,
Vertueux, sans rien réprimer,
Qui n'eût pas besoin de s'armer
D'une sagesse austère et dure,
Et qui de l'ardeur la plus pure,
Se pût une fois enflammer.
. . . .

FONTENELLE.

Would not one say, my friend, that the French poet had drawn these lines after my cousin? But what is wanting to complete the portrait? There must be added, an exquisite delicacy of taste, of thought, and of sentiment; that charming

mind, from which so often escapes striking words and thoughts, of which she alone does not know the value, and which are so surprising in a young female who has scarcely passed her infancy; that open and sentimental fervour for her religion; and that profound respect for whatever belongs to virtue.

Bring back to your mind the day, now long past, when, forgetting ourselves before Hermacintha and Maria, we, like true children, or rather like mere students, dared to attack questions of the greatest difficulty, and subjects of the gravest kind, even those which an unalterable veneration ought to forbid to every man of sense, elsewhere than in his prayers. We spoke of persons who have no religion. Hermacintha regarded us with severity, astonished at our audacity and folly. Maria, struck with a sudden horror, said to my sister, "O Hermacintha! are there really persons so miserable?"—"Yes," replied I.—"It

must be, then," said she, raising toward Heaven a look which I cannot describe, "it must be, then, among those who are born blind."

It would be necessary, my friend, still to complete this portrait, to paint her fortitude and patience during her long illness; her cares and benefactions toward the happy vassals of my sister; her zeal and ardour to do good, which manifested themselves in her from her infancy. One day, when she was scarcely six years old, I went into the park in search of her, by order of my sister, in company with Mademoiselle Melrode. We found her, at length, on her way back to the château, panting with fatigue and pleasure. She threw herself on her governess's neck: "Oh! how happy I am," said she: "the farmer's wife of the next seigniory was very miserable, but she is not so now; she has bought her house again; they have brought back her sheep, and her child is almost cured!"

For some time previous, Maria had hoarded her little allowance, and her presents from Hermacintha; and behold the use which she had made of them, and which she had accomplished with a dexterity and perseverance far above her age! I remember also one day, during an affecting sermon on the poor and on Christian charity, she seemed, for some minutes asleep. Her head was hung down, her great hat hid her pretty figure from my sister and me, when suddenly she awoke from her meditation, and, lifting toward her instructress her eyes bathed in tears, and throwing herself into her arms, "Oh! my mother," she cried, "for the future, none shall be in want any where, shall there? Tell me that you will not let them!" Melting words, from the mouth of a child who knew so well the heart of Hermacintha!

I should not finish for days, were I to call forth the recollection of all the proofs

which she has given of the purity and delicacy of her soul. Our good prelate, in speaking of her, has said, "Who-soever formed her heart was more than mortal;" and this was Hermacintha!

LETTER II.

The same to the same.

My friend, every thing announces the approach of my happiness. Maria, the celestial Maria, she whom I never approach without emotion, resigns herself to that modest and bewitching cheerfulness which comes from the soul, and which sits so gracefully upon her!

I have many things to write to you. I am so full of happiness, I am surrounded by so many delights, that if it were only permitted me never to quit the side of Maria, I should be unable to conceive how I could ever be more happy hereafter. She comes in search of me involuntarily, and easily finds me. She strives in vain to withhold the expressions of her love, and of that inward pleasure

which her eyes, her manner, her voice, and every thing else reveals. I am the happiest of men; my beloved continually gives me new proofs of it. It is me whom she consults to decide her opinions; and I, as if that blissful moment in which I shall say *Yes* were come, as if I could think of nothing but that sweet word; I return to all she says no other words than these, *Yes, cousin.*—Hermacintha, the incomparable Hermacintha, is happy in our happiness as well as ourselves; she looks on it complacently, and seems to enjoy her work. The other day she called me, and, contrary to our custom, permitted Maria and I to walk together in her view, at such a distance as not to be overheard. After some time, she joined us, and asked us if we were not impatient of her severity, and her slowness to unite us. Maria blushed, and gave a look which authorized me to believe, that such were her thoughts; but she was unable to reply.

I made up for her silence. "Hermacintha," said I, "can one be too soon happy? We have been long tried, and nothing justifies this hard delay. I demand, even from this moment, greater freedom. What! we are about to be married, and Maria dares not take my arm! She refuses me a hand which will soon belong to me! Never to be alone!" Maria, the timid Maria, now drew herself away from me, and threw herself into the arms of my sister, to hide her charming confusion.

"My friends," interrupted Hermacintha, "this is the happiest period of your lives; endeavour to prolong it." Then, she ordered me to give an arm to each. Maria offered me her hand. I pressed it, for the first time, in mine. I had not presumed to join it to my lips; but Hermacintha encouraging me with a look of kindness, I dared to kiss it! I felt my beloved tremble. I was transported beyond myself. "Behold," said

my sister, "the fruits of your education! Those true pleasures and sweet emotions which vulgar lovers can never enjoy, even at the height of what they call their happiness. Be satisfied. You have reached the moment of your last trials." Shall I paint to you the joy of my beloved at those delightful words; shall I paint to you my own felicity? No; supply both from your imagination.

The next day, emboldened by the success of the evening before, I ventured to ask permission to see my sister and Maria in the morning. It was impossible. At the dinner-hour I was in the parlour, waiting for them, when a basket of new books was brought in. You know my curiosity. I opened it, and overran the titles of the different works; among which, to my great surprise, I found a copy of my *Essay on Happiness*. I was endeavouring to guess ier or not they were informed that I was the author, when they entered the

room. While we were at dinner, Hermacintha asked what books we should read in the evening. "Our travels are finished," said Maria, "and that is a great pity!"—"I have sent for a selection of new books. Julius, it seems to me that you have examined them?"—"Yes, sister."—"Have you taken particular notice of any one?"—"I have only read the titles."—"Do you know whether there is an *Essay on Happiness* among them?"—"Yes, there is."—"I have heard it much praised; we will begin with that. How many volumes?"—"Two small duodecimos."

In the evening I returned from my favourite walk to the high dike of the Lec, and found Hermacintha much affected. "What affects you?"—"I am enchanted with this work," said she; "we must absolutely read it. I have run over several excellent passages. The author accuses himself of youth and misanthropy; and if it is so, he makes a pane-

gyric on his defects." Maria remonstrated, and preferred travels, or particular histories. "Be satisfied," replied Hermacintha, "I engage that the work, notwithstanding its title, has a natural interest. It attaches its reader, and when you have begun it, it will be impossible for you not to read it through."

My friend, I was overjoyed. I was also as proud as I was happy to receive such a suffrage. I asked whether I should read; "Yes," was the reply, and I began, while Hermacintha was working a veil for Maria, and Maria and Mademoiselle Melrode had each other employments. When we had reached the end of the second part, "It is very interesting," said Maria, with tears; and Mademoiselle replied, with her Swiss *naïveté*, "I have dearly felt all that!" Hermacintha pointed out to me, in several places, the intention of the author. I was in Heaven. When I came to the episode, which you have approved of,

my emotion betrayed me. Seeing that every one shared in it, I could restrain myself no longer; and throwing myself at the feet of my cousin, and presenting her the book, "How happy am I," I exclaimed, "in your praise: the book is mine!" What a picture! With her astonishment, Maria mingled a certain pride; she seemed to take to herself the greater part of the merit which she had found. After some eulogiums, they wished me a good night, that they might pass judgment alone, with more impartiality; and the next day, before dinner, all the three assured me that they had passed a great part of the night in finishing the book. Hermacintha added, "If it had been possible, and if we could have been permitted to break in upon the order of the house, we should have begged of you, even in the morning, to come to us, and receive our compliments and thanks." You know how rigid Hermacintha is in these little things.

She would never have forgiven herself, had she failed in them in a single instance. We dine at two o'clock, and till this hour the ladies walk invariably alone. Never have I happened to approach, before dinner-time, that part of the garden in which they were, without finding some one stationed to warn me that the ladies were that way; that is, that I was forbidden to go there. Hermacintha promised my father and mother, that she would never deviate from these rules of the most strict propriety and perfect order. They are small things, she says, but they belong to greater ones which depend upon them; in the same manner that little rings belong to the keys of a building. My good parents owed, in great part, their uninterrupted union, and their long felicity, to the observation of these strict precautions.

From this time, Hermacintha has regarded me with increased respect, and

seems to occupy herself seriously in relation to me. Every thing discovers this. To-morrow she gives us a breakfast. Strange and novel adventure! I am to be with the ladies—at what hour, can you guess?—Before day!

LETTER III.

From the same to the same.

THE sun had scarcely streaked the horizon when I reached Hermacintha's pavilion. It stands on one of the prettiest knolls in our beautiful gardens, above the Rosendaal.* The Lec runs at the bottom; and the eye looks over the vast plain of the Bethuve, which is watered and adorned, at this season of the year, by the Lingue, and the Whaal. That beautiful champaign, smiling with verdure and flowers, affords no sight of those waters, which, in the winter, treat it so ill, except under a veil of trees, by which it is covered, and principally under cherry-trees. I stopped before entering

* Valley of Roses.

the pavilion, ravished by such a prospect. The clouds of heaven, which succeeded each other rapidly, gave notice of the approach of the sun; a soft refreshing breeze wafted toward me the perfume of the flowers; and numerous birds, flitting between the branches of the trees, preluded their early songs. Every thing seemed to promise a festival. Hermacintha and Maria, seated at the door of the pavilion, contemplated devoutly the magnificent rising of the sun. His first rays, piercing with difficulty through the foliage upon their dear and truly beautiful heads, appeared to crown them. I approached. "We are waiting for you," said Hermacintha; and we seated ourselves upon the grass. We breakfasted frugally; but with that elegant simplicity, and that pure and undivided contentment, of which none of your superb collations at Paris can ever convey the idea. Hermacintha afterward began to speak, and the following are nearly

her words:—"My brother, and you whom I love to call my child, you are grown up, and matured, and impatient, as I already see, to be united. It is time, therefore, my friends, that you should know the causes which have hitherto retarded your happiness; it is time also, that you should learn all that you may hitherto be ignorant of concerning me.

"Though very young I am nevertheless a widow. Cold and inaccessible as I am thought, I have experienced sentiments as lively as your own.

"You have often heard speak of the illustrious Fœdor. Scarcely had I commenced the habit of thinking daily on my chimera, the man whom I created and made solely for myself, when Fœdor appeared before my eyes, and so filled up my wishes and my outline, that my astonishment at this amazing conformity will remain with me during my life.

"Almost while in youth, he had

reached the rank of admiral. A real philosopher, deeply learned, of unchangeable virtue, and an amiable exterior, he was a true hero. His countenance was open, noble, and highly expressive. Without boast, without extravagance in his opinions, he seemed to have studied carefully, and to have discovered on all subjects the truth. It was impossible to approach him without conceiving a profound respect for him; it was impossible to enjoy his conversation without becoming strongly attached to him. His air was at times somewhat severe; or at least it appeared so to the eyes of the world: but how soft, how amiable, how gracious was he not when he smiled! What effect of magic had made his whole person inspire confidence and intimacy? The littleness, and perhaps defects, of common life, did not seem to have any existence in him, for he ennobled whatever he did. He seemed to have taken for a task from his infancy, to try to what point of moral

perfection man is capable of arriving. How amiable and even joyous, did not reason appear in him! how easy and agreeable, virtue! But, at the same time, what modesty in his gaiety; what moderation, delicacy, and reason, in his pleasures!

"Before I perceived it, my parents directed my first impressions. They had no trouble therefore in guessing the secret; and when I made them the trembling confession of my sentiments, of those of Fœdor, and of his suit for my hand, I received only the kindest approbation, and praises on my choice.

"Soon after, I was married, and a year of inexpressible happiness ran away with so much rapidity, that it has left me only the single impression of perfect happiness. I seek in vain in my memory for other recollections; that alone has absorbed and mastered all the rest.

"Unfortunately, the States-General selected my Fœdor for the command of a

fleet, which, in making a voyage round the world, was to increase our possessions, and the number of our colonies ; and, by the solution of several important problems, advance the progress of astronomy and geography.

"He went!—We made a solemn vow, on the dike of the Helder, where we parted, never to contract new bonds, should heaven take either of us to itself. These were his last words! He wore a frock-coat, adapted to his voyage. I see him still at the tiller of the boat which carried him to his ship, depart under the deepest emotion, spread his waving flag, with an air at once martial and melancholy, press my picture to his heart, and repeating these words, which echo for ever in my ears—"To thee, or, to Him!" He lifted, while he spoke, his regards to the skies, then pure and cloudless, but brilliant with a shining darkness. His words were a prophecy. I was never to see him again upon this

earth! Six months afterward, he was overtaken by a frightful tempest. His vessel, dismasted, went to pieces. He caused the boats to be lowered to the ship's side. His sailors were terrified. He descended alone into the first boat, filled it with people, and returned into the ship, to save his whole crew, by the help of rafts, and all the furniture of the vessel. A pilot alone remained in the hold of the vessel. No one dared to go in search of him. Fœdor flew to the place, brought him upon deck, and scarcely was the old man in the boat which received him, when the vessel was swallowed up beneath Fœdor.— Half sunken in the waves, he was heard to exclaim, *God, Hermacintha, and Holland!*—Let us dry our tears, my friends; he is in the abode of the blessed, and it is mine to remain here for you, and to perform my duty.

"After this, two years had scarcely passed, when several pretenders offered

themselves to me, and were rejected with a sort of horror. None will ever equal Fœdor; and should another himself, if that were possible, appear, he should be repulsed. *The heart which can love twice, is unworthy of true happiness!*

"The reality of mine, this high example of extraordinary felicity, and of its short duration, renders me nice and timid in whatever concerns you two. I have witnessed, with coolness, all the effects of what is called love. I have been struck with the common errors on this subject; and though I am persuaded of your good sentiments, I fear to unite you. Are you sufficiently sheltered from every delusion, to guarantee to me your future happiness? What assurance can I receive from a child of sixteen, and an inexperienced young man, who is unacquainted with the world, and whom no seduction has yet tried?

At these cruel words, but cruel by design, Maria burst into tears, and throw-

ing herself into the bosom of Hermacintha. "When you will," said she, "when you will!" As for me, as surprised as I was sharply piqued, "Farewell, my sister, farewell!" I was about to go. "What are you doing?" said my sister. "I am going," replied I; "I am resolved to leave you; to travel, to expose myself to all seductions, and to prove to you, that your brother, the lover of my cousin, has not to fear that time will change his sentiments." At these words, Maria recovered from her reverie, and took one of the hands of Hermacintha, which she eagerly pressed. She had turned exceedingly pale. I stopped, and they both left me. I know not what passed between them, while they were without; but, some time after, Hermacintha returned alone: "Julius," said she, "it is not often that hearts are entirely formed during the period of youth, and yet such only, and with the aid of an early profit of the experience of the world, are

shielded against inconstancy and temptation. You are as well tried as it is possible for you to be, under the guidance of a young woman; but the loss of a father is irreparable; it will always make itself felt in you. You have been born and educated with *some* degree of advantage for acquiring a defence against the seductions of the heart; but I have fears from the impetuosity of your character, and the ardour of your imagination. A father alone, by exhibiting to you certain consequent miseries, could impress you with all their horror: and, by his constant direction, give you that anticipated experience which is of so much use, and which is acquired with so much difficulty in youth. I am only a woman; I can but require of you to be well on your guard against yourself. It is for you to finish the work of your education, and to fix it. You will never find another Maria; and you will never love another like her:

your souls are too united; but as to the seductions of the moment, as to grosser temptations, to which you are both wholly strangers, I fear for these, if you do not watch over yourself incessantly. It is when we are out of our sphere that we are the most easily surprised; and when we are ourselves the weakest, every one is stronger than we. You are worthy, and I am satisfied; but if you change, what is to become of my child? What will become of that angel of purity and good sense, a stranger, so to say, upon earth? I should die, and the world would lose Maria, the most beautiful model of virtue and sincerity which has ever existed. I am responsible for her happiness to our parents. From the bosom of the other life, they do not cease to watch over their beloved niece, their orphan, their favourite child; and I, who am bound for her welfare, shall lose the fruit of my past life, and the hope of the future, especially that of happily departing

from this world, wherein I have nothing substantial, exclusive of Maria and yourself. You know this."—"Have done, have done," returned I; "never shall I be any one's but Maria's: this I promise you in the face of heaven, who hears me, who sees me, and judges me; I shall be always the same." When I had said these words, she called my cousin, and pressing us both to her breast—"Well, then, my friends," said she, "be united without delay. Forget not that I have believed you on your word, and that the less I have required proofs, the more you are bound to fulfil your pledge. In making you the guardians of your own happiness, I place under your care that which must ensure the tranquillity and repose of the souls of your deceased parents; and if, from the other world, spirits can hover over this earth, doubt not that their eyes are always on you. When you are tempted to quit the road of right, remember, that at whatever hour

pleasure offers herself, death, at the same instant, transforms myriads of beauties into hideous corpses; that death is for ever in the midst of you; that born a moment ago, only another moment, and we must finish our lives. I have been, and I am sure of remaining, constant in my resolution, because I have always summoned seriousness to be the attendant of pleasure, and gaiety to join the practice of virtue. Do you the same, and I answer for your success, if you know how to avoid the occasions of evil. Brave no temptation; this, perhaps, is the whole secret of virtue; this, at least, is mine. Remember, my friends, that she who gives you these counsels is no old woman, surfeited with the pleasures of the world, and who reviles them because she can no longer enjoy them. I view them neither with spite nor with rancour; but they cannot seduce me. Only the pleasures of the soul can give true enjoyments; those of the senses are brief

and imperfect, for they are limited, material, and perishable. I fear for what you may suffer from that fever of love, which is often so melancholy in its effects. In reality, love is almost always a falsehood, a phantom, an imposture; and it is, in that case, the source of a thousand sorrows. Inconstancy and disgust are its natural fruits, and suicide is often of the number. The greatest, perhaps, of these evils is that of debauching and degrading the human heart, to the point, that it becomes incapable of discerning the misery and vileness into which it is fallen. As to true love, that itself has inevitable thorns. The restraints, the interferences of society, the obstacles which it so often opposes to our desires, insensibility on one side or the other, and lastly death, the unfailing end of all things, and in which every thing concludes, are afflictions and sources of anguish which nothing can remove. What then are the delights of love? May you

never experience that they are tediously and dearly purchased, even when we are the most happy in meeting with them!"

She said no more, and we imitated her silence. We were deeply moved; but, on arriving at the house, Hermacintha directed the re-appearance of every thing as usual, and accordingly it re-appeared.

LETTER IV.

From the same to the same.

You are not come, then, dear Adolphus! The happiest day of your friend's life approaches, and should it pass without you? Come, come; leave Paris; leave the States for a few days. While you seek only for war, and give yourself up to glory, every thing here breathes of peace and the true pleasures. Come back, my friend; come back! Maria desires it: what can be wanting more!

LETTER V.

Adolphus to Julius.

How am I to answer you? I have been wholly given up to uneasiness for the loss of Corinna, the enchantress Corinna. I have wanted to talk with you of her a hundred times, and yet you scarcely know her name. Wholly engrossed with Maria, what does not belong to yourself cannot draw your attention. Corinna is become still more beautiful, more witty, and more lovely, than at our first acquaintance; she is perfect. Meanwhile, my parents insist on my marrying your rich countrywoman. They hate Corinna, and I have promised to set out for North Holland, to Adelaide's father's, taking you and Amsterdam in my way. I shall leave Paris with plea-

sure. Can you guess this riddle? Corinna is already gone to Holland, on a visit. The Duke of Ast and his sister accompany her, and are her distant relations. You shall see her; she is the beauty of beauties; she is Circe or Armida. Formerly, she was dearer to me; now, I do not feel an equal interest in her, except as it relates to the past; nevertheless, my passion is doubly ardent. I should be inconsolable, if I despaired of soon bringing her back. I am just setting out; but, before I rejoin you, I must open my heart. Listen to the history of my acquaintance with Corinna, in order that I may not need to inform you of what concerns her when I am with you.

I have been still wilder than I am at present. A few years ago, I arrived at Paris from my regiment, when the commencement of my career had gained me some consideration. In spite of my youth, I had given satisfaction. My

parents and their numerous acquaintance loaded me with caresses and compliments, and by this means encouraged a failing which I seek to correct in myself. I visited frequently my maternal aunt, a woman who enjoys very high respect, and is singularly well-informed, possessing to a miracle the art of doing the honours of her house, of receiving her guests with that superior grace, that manner so abundant in charms, which belongs to every woman of France, above all of any other nation. She lived in the best society of Paris. Though much advanced in years, she loved young people, and knew so well how to guide the circle which she gathered around her, that all found the time too short, and always left her too soon. A young Polish lady, among her friends, whom I had heard spoken of with extraordinary eulogium, was not of these parties. She visited her from time to time in the evenings, and sometimes received the visits

of my aunt, together with a very select few. Struck with hearing the incessant praises of this incomparable beauty, I solicited to be introduced to her.—"Impossible," said my aunt, laughing. "You are too young, and too inflammable, my friend; my sister would forbid it, and very rightly; and your father still more." I persisted, but without success. "Understand," said she, "that she is a cruel Armida; her happiness consists in making others miserable. Young Theodore killed himself for her; Ernest, of whom you have heard speak, lost his senses. She is a superior woman, but a coquette. She knows all the influence of her beauty and the charms of her wit, and she endeavours to enjoy life out of the usual road. Her society could not but be better adapted to form a young man like you, than that of an old aunt; but I dare not." I desisted for several days. On the evening of that which was fixed for my departure, as I was taking leave

of my aunt, a letter was brought. The address was written in a delicate and beautiful hand-writing. It was said that it came from Corinna. At this name, I seized the billet, and I was permitted to break the seal, and read it. This gave me encouragement, and I petitioned for leave to write the answer. There was nothing difficult in my request, as it is not usual to sign morning notes. My aunt consented, and the billet went. But I lengthened my visit; I staid dinner, and immediately after came one of the servants of the unknown beauty, with a reply to my message, and an invitation for the next evening, in which I was expressly named. I persisted in my desire to go, and delayed my departure. The next day, we went to Corinna's at eight in the evening. Her house had an air of elegance and simplicity which I have seen no where else. In ascending, I met a young lady, passing along a gallery, and I bowed to her profoundly. Well-

shaped, and elegant in her air, I believed her to be a sister of her whom we were going to visit. It was one of her women. I took much notice of her, and she of me. We entered the duchess's apartment. Nothing is to be compared with the elegance of the furniture, to the order which reigned throughout, to the manner and mien of the people in her service, and of the pretty females who were busy in the different rooms. When I saw Corinna, I was astonished, Julius, at her beauty! I was received with a politeness which was mixed with a little hauteur, and I know not what of overawing and of bewitching at the same time. We found a large assembly. Corinna appeared to reign over the senses and the hearts of the men. The most elegant, and the most confident, felt themselves obliged to observe a respectful and subdued behaviour in her presence.

I had the ease which is conferred by a

military life. The sex had told me that I was handsome. I was the youngest, and, as I believed, the most captivating in the company; so that when I saw, at the end of an hour, Corinna and my aunt talking incessantly together, and laughing, and looking archly at me, I imagined that I had pleased, that Corinna was wounded, that I might show my triumph on the instant, and that in the end, nothing was to be refused to a hero of eighteen, beloved, and armed for the combat. I gave my regiment orders to take the field. I became gallant, talked fast, and made my efforts to please. But, in the midst of my victory, half-past eleven struck, and my aunt demanded my hand. We departed, on my side with an inexpressible grief of heart. "I set out for the army in a few hours," said I to Corinna, in a tone doubtlessly doleful. "In a few hours," returned she, laughing; "I wish you a good journey." This cheerful tone annoyed

me, and I thought on nothing but vengeance, when two of my aunt's servants came, according to custom, to give her their arms to assist her to her carriage. Ever since a fall which a clumsy beau had occasioned her, she trusted to none but her servants to escort her up and down the staircases. I quitted the arm of my aunt; and seeing the little chambermaid whom I had met on my first entering the house, my feet led me involuntarily to her, and I began to pay her some compliments.

During this, the doors of the apartments were opened, and many persons were departing. I drew back to the further end of the gallery, not to be seen conversing with the girl. I was called. I saw the scrape I was in, and descended step by step. It was too late; every body was gone. My aunt's carriage had staid the last; but, becoming impatient, she had left me, laughing, and believing that I should be obliged to traverse Paris

on foot, in the middle of the night, in bad weather, and in a dress the most studied, and the thinnest. I laid my plan. I re-ascended the staircase, and already behold me in the drawing-room again. Corinna and her uncle, an old gentleman in a blue ribband, seated at the fire-place, were in the room alone. He slept, and snored. "You here, Sir," said Corinna, politely, but coldly; "explain this mystery!" I did so, and begged her to avenge the malice of my aunt, by ordering her carriage. "Yes," said she, and at the same time I saw her spring towards the bell. I stopped her, and entreated her to grant me a few instants more: after some hesitation, she consented. I related my campaigns, my adventures, with the greatest possible number of compliments in my recital. She heard me with attention and pleasure. I felt myself inspired with an extraordinary vivacity, garrulity, and confidence. We joked the old uncle, who took no notice

of us. Presently I rose, and she also; and this woman, a little before so awful, so much the mistress of every thing around her, was brought, by a child of eighteen, to sport with him! I unfastened her beautiful ringlets; she scolded; I stole her comb and her gloves, and went to hide myself, with my booty, behind a window-curtain. I did this again and again; and, the last time, I was waiting impatiently in my retreat, for her to come and give me an opportunity to kiss her pretty hand, when our blue ribband awoke, and, thinking me gone, began by expressing his satisfaction, and launched next into invectives upon me, and into reproaches on his niece. The latter, knowing me to have but little patience, grew afraid of a *scene*; but it was not a scene of this kind that I was in search of. I kept myself quiet, while the quarrel grew warmer, and the uncle, at last, left the room in displeasure,

and very angry. Immediately, I ran to Corinna. How beautiful she looked at this moment! At one o'clock, she had not yet demanded her ringlets. I begged her to allow me to go home on foot, and she consented; but, instead of taking the way of the door, I took that of the window-curtain, behind which I had been concealed, after having seen Corinna enter the further room, attended by her woman.

I was fatigued with my journey, with my residence in Paris, and with the evening I had passed; and the wind, hail, and rain, beat against the window at my back. I slept in my chair, without project or forethought; but I was soon awakened by the noise of the door, which was opened. I saw my pretty *camarista* come out of her mistress's chamber. She went in search of a handsome lamp, which she brought in her hand, when, in a few minutes, she re-

turned. I moved my chair, and she was frightened; and, in starting, she extinguished the lamp. The poor girl was vexed, and a second time left the room. The door of the bedchamber was open; I glided into it on tip-toe, and placed myself on a large sopha, which I found by feeling my way. The lamp came again, and was placed near the chimney, and the room was left in peace, without any discovery of me. Behold me now, then, shut up in Corinna's chamber, where she slept tranquilly, and believed herself alone. When she found the contrary, it was too late!.... At daybreak, Corinna and I separated, and by no effort since have I been able to see her. She promised me her friendship, but warned me, that I should never see her again.

What shall I add more, my friend? I prolonged my stay in Paris, though I had in my pocket the peremptory orders

of the minister. But all my attempts at another sight of Corinna were useless: I obtained only letters, which breathed the tenderest regard, the greatest friendship, and the most entire disinterestedness. Ever since, though invisible, she has been my faithful guide. If I have avoided a thousand new errors, it is to her counsels, to her foresight, that I owe it. Happy he who finds an affectionate and faithful mistress; but still more happy, who finds a real friend! How many solicitudes, how many unexpected turns, how many essential services, have I not experienced from the invisible Corinna! O, woman! your soul is superior to ours, in love, in friendship, and in every affection of the heart! And yet you bewail yourself! Yes, you lose quickly that flower of beauty, so attractive and so fleeting; but you are, and you shall ever be, the charm and the support of the life of man; at once the

end and the reward of his toils and his existence. That which upon earth gives us the surest glimpse of divine perfection, is virtuous beauty.

LETTER VI.

From Julius to Adolphus.

TALK to me no more of the woman who detains you in Paris. What, Adolphus! is it a woman like this whom you love? A coquette! Worse still—a woman systematically and coldly vicious? Fly her, my friend, as you would a pestilence....Come into the sphere of Maria! Come, and admire the perfection of beauty and of the graces; of all the other charms united with that of all the virtues. As for me, I cannot conceive how a woman, contemptible for her vices, can be capable of winning any one! I am sure, as far as regards myself, that I shall not have such a snare as that to suffer from.

Corinna, and all those who resemble her, are unworthy, I do not say of the attachment, but even of a passing look, from any man of good sense.

LETTER VII.

Adolphus to Julius.

I HAVE received thy reply to my last letter. Thou wilt moralize then for ever, thou eternal censor! Yes, I love Corinna! Yes, I would give my life for a second moment of happiness with her. Do you know, that since the meeting, in which we formed so quick and so thorough an acquaintance, there is no kind of good advice, nor of services, which she has not given me? She has been to me a mother, a tender, vigilant sister. Listen—after our first adventure I returned to my regiment. I grieved at the singularity of her conduct, and at her refusal of permission to write to her; but she, nevertheless, wrote to me; always knew, I know not how, that I had

received her last letter, went over my actions, good or bad, and gave me information as to my acquaintances; she smoothed the road of life before my feet, and still persisted in refusing my letters! It would be too long to give you a recital of all I owe her. If I have not been lost a hundred times, in various transactions, it is to her only that I owe it. A single example will be sufficient; it consists in the latest service which she has rendered me. I was, in Provence, strongly taken with the charms of Angiolina, a young Italian widow, travelling in France with her relations, and hardly eighteen years of age. It was with inexpressible difficulty that I left the place which she inhabited, to go toward Nice. I was afterward obliged to leave the camp, being seriously ill. Angiolina was the cause and the subject of my continual delirium. Scarcely convalescent, I declared that I must marry her, or die. I was about to be united to her. I saw

her extremely rich, of a family equal to our own, highly educated, and endowed with a brilliant understanding: I could discover no objection. My parents consented with reluctance; but they did consent. Every one spoke of the great qualities and virtues of Angiolina; every one envied my good fortune. The day was already fixed, when a letter was presented to me, containing these words:—

"There is, in the city where you are, a young colonel, who, as well as you, is acquainted with Angiolina. Talk with him about her, before you marry. The tenderest and most disinterested friendship conjures you.

"CORINNA."

I knew the colonel, and immediately went to find him. We conversed much on Angiolina. He spoke ill of her. I was angry. We quarrelled. He declared himself her lover, and a favoured

lover. We appointed a meeting for the next morning. Scarcely were we on the ground, when a young man on horseback came at full speed, gave me a letter, and instantly left us. These were the words of the second letter:—

"Rash young man, rather thank your fellow-countryman, who alone can undeceive you! Angiolina is a deceiver; nor is this all; she is entirely unworthy of an honest man. Explain yourself, and calmly; you will afterward have to thank both your rival and me.

"CORINNA."

How could she watch over me at that distance? She had, doubtlessly, some one about my person, who gave her a faithful account of all which concerned me, and who received able instructions.

I wept with rage and regret. Nevertheless, I confided all to my rival. He

showed me, in return, the portrait of Angiolina, painted by herself, her hair, and letters of which I had, in great part, either the originals, or the copies. I formed an intimate acquaintance with this young man. Six weeks after, I saved his life in a furious duel; he came out sound and safe, while he was reckoned upon as lost. But this is enough of Corinna, to the lover of Maria. I am setting out to join her. You will see her, without doubt. Her presence will do more in a moment, than all my letters in a year.—Adieu.

LETTER VIII.

Adolphus to Corinna.

I HAVE been in Holland since Wednesday. I am detained in spite of myself, O beauty of beauties! far from the scenes which you fill with enchantments. I must remain till to-morrow evening. You made me promise, some time ago, to give you a description of Hermacintha's gardens, and I am about to redeem my word. I seek to exhaust the time which flows so slowly before my departure. Can I do better than address myself to you?

I went yesterday to see that beautiful place, accompanied by Hermacintha and the prelate of Arnhem. The latter is an ecclesiastic remarkable for his excellent life, his learning, and the public

respect which he enjoys. He is very aged; but he is the finest old man I have ever seen. Notwithstanding the burden of seventy years, he walked over the whole gardens with me, and I thought that I was more fatigued than he. The history of his whole life is written on his calm, open, and, at the same time, intelligent countenance. His look is lively and profound. Every thing in his appearance expresses the well-ordered life, inward peace, and undisturbed hope of the future; in a word, he is the beloved *director* of the women. I often borrow his own expressions.

Hermacintha's is, perhaps, the most beautiful of gardens. It is situated on the declivity of the little chain of hills which border the Lec, between the provinces of Utrecht and Guelderland. Several towns show themselves in the horizon, beyond that beautiful valley, the Betuve. They seem to serve as objects from the gardens, and as if built for that

purpose. In the prospect are expanded meadows, kept up with admirable care. Nowhere is the herbage so green, so healthy, and so even. Farms, inhabited by families in good circumstances, of respectable appearance, and happy among each other, are contained within the park. In one is a dairy, with the cow-houses and appurtenances of an almost inconceivable neatness; the cows come from Friesland, and are as beautiful as in their own country. In another is a flock of merinoes, of the finest breed. A little further is an assemblage of the most beautiful domestic animals. No gun is allowed to be fired in this new Eden; and each animal, tame and familiar, comes voluntarily to those who walk in it. They are so well taught, that they will not hurt even a child passing through them alone; so that there has never happened the slightest accident. "We have planned," said the good prelate, "an asylum of peace

for the animal creation, which they find no where else among mankind. We have received, collected, and protected numerous domestic species, and you see we have succeeded. The deer and the dog live amicably together; and if one, of any of the animals here, for a moment forgets himself, and threatens a child, or a feeble quadruped, all the rest of his species run, with terrifying cries, to succour the party attacked. The children are so accustomed to them, that they are never frightened."

"Well!" said Hermacintha, "what do you think of my aviary?"—"I do not see it," replied I. We entered a grove, in which a multitude of birds were springing from tree to tree, and none fled at our approach. Hermacintha took some seed, which was deposited in a concealed place, and offered it to them, and they came to feed.—"Strangers are astonished at this," said she; "but is it more astonishing that

the education of Franconi's stag? I have had less trouble than he. These poor animals have been less beaten, less tormented; in this only consists the difference. I love this better than hunting; at the same time, I endure no mischievous animals; none such come here. My design is not so frivolous as you may think it. It is that of rearing animals of the most beautiful kinds. Are not our horses, our cows, and merinoes, beautiful. As for our dogs, you should see how soon they can destroy a fox or wolf!"—"That is a contradiction," said I; "it appears you hunt."—"No; they are employed against hurtful animals, when they threaten us; but if that happens, they never return into this peaceful retreat."

Now, we were conducted to the nearest farm. The farmer's wife, his daughters, and the servants, were extremely well dressed. As soon as they saw us, they took off their aprons, which they placed

apart, and then came to welcome Hermacintha. Their hands and their whole persons were as clean as can be imagined. They had not those filthy feet which are so common among country-people.—"We do not allow the women to employ themselves in dirty occupations, nor to go with their feet naked, nor dirtily clothed. Every farmer, and even every farmer's man, on coming home, finds his house, often elegant, almost always pretty, and never dirty; and this attaches him the more to his home, and to his country; makes him endure his labours the more patiently, and *renders his whole character the softer and more refined.* Far," said she, "from the men having to complain, you see that they are the gainers."—"In so beautiful a garden, no statues, no obelisks?"—"Stop," said she, opening the gate, "look here!" We saw, in the meadow, a tall and well-made girl, who was summoning her obedient cows, and milking them near a

spring. Hermacintha called her to us, and made us remark, in French, (which these people do not understand,) her beautiful figure, which had been deformed by no stays, nor by too heavy toil. "Look," said she, "at these rosy cheeks, these bright and healthful eyes, and see in them the expression of happiness and innocence." And then, taking off a little bonnet which the girl had on her head, "Do your Phidiases produce such beautiful locks?" said she, smiling on the young milkmaid, who was, by this time, more than half abashed. "Come, my dear," added she, "let me repair the mischief I have done you." The other consented without affectation, and Hermacintha re-adjusted her head-dress.

Giving our steps another direction, we saw a woodman fell a tree, at two or three strokes of the hatchet. "What strength the young man has!" exclaimed I to the prelate. "So he has," said he; and yet he is one of the weakest of

the place." Meanwhile, this was a youth of the stoutest limbs, a copy of Hercules! "Though it is the heat of summer, he is clothed?" "Yes," said Hermaciutha; "that is necessary.—What a hard thing it would be for a poor wife, employed all day in the care of her house and children, and only enjoying the company of her husband but for a part of the twenty-four hours, to see him come home to her sun-burnt, his skin coarse, or dirty and disgusting! Gentlemen, there is no superiority of sex to be sustained by this. If the woman ought not to be disgusting in her person, by a still stronger argument, ought not the man. The peasant, or artificer, at his work, at a distance from the women, is not in danger of temptation, as the latter would be, if, while they remain at the farm, they were exposed to the visits of cleaner and more agreeable men.

"As to temples and columns, you see the best; our young women, our peasants,

and our beautiful trees."—"But I see no larches, no cypresses, no firs."—"I do not admire them; they are too gloomy, and, like self-love, they are tranquil when every thing around them shakes. What is the worth of a tree which does not change at the return of spring; or changes, if at all, but imperceptibly? You will find here neither green trees, nor flowers without odour, nor fruits which cannot be eaten; with the single exception of a few individuals of the most beautiful species, which are suffered, in order to complete the collection. I have admitted, not without hesitation, some cedars of Libanus, and the Weymouth and Italian pines."

Never did I see, any where, so prodigious a quantity of flowers and fruits; I remarked that they were incessantly gathered, and that yet they did not seem to diminish. "These, in my apprehension, are the first elements of a garden. Flowers and fruits are the most beautiful

things which the country has to offer. Why not exhibit them in abundance? What can we do better? These numerous orchards give to the gardens an embellishment, and add to the substantiality of their enjoyments; while the latter, by being mixed with the orchards, give them a beauty in which they are themselves deficient. It is thus that a company composed of people of merit, on the one part, and pretty women on the other, is the most complete, and always to be preferred. You see, further, that I have no glasses. I grow only indigenous plants, upon the same principle. I make no use of manure. I require from the earth only what it is able to furnish; and we may walk in these gardens without being poisoned or suffocated by unwholsome odours. No fountains; no other cascades than those created by nature herself in our rivulets. No grottoes nor buildings; our farm-houses are much better; there is nothing but what is real,

useful, and in its place. The single exception which I permit, is the ice-house. If you ask for places of shelter, the farm-houses will yield enough. No benches nor seats, except the turf and the hillocks. They are useless to those who are not already infirm or sick. These latter seldom move far from the house, and it is for their accommodation that you see chairs around it."

"I catch you in a mistake: I see a temple." "Yes; there is one; but one only. It is called Hermacintha's pavilion; or the cottage of the rose-bearers.* Once in every year, we crown three of the most estimable girls in the village, who from that time receive a more careful education. The rose-bearers form the council of the women of the village. When any one has troubles to confide, advice or consolation to seek, she goes to the nearest rose-

* Rosières. Tr.

bearer, who gives her instruction or consolation, often adequate to the occasion, and always at least useful. You have observed what respect certain women of the village are accosted and saluted by the village; the cause is, that they are ancient rose-bearers."

When we returned to the château, we found three young women perfectly clean, well-bred, and respectably dressed. You know that all here wear the costume of the village. These three girls, whom I supposed to be young ladies of the neighbourhood, were the three rose-bearers of the year. The clothes of the ladies were scarcely superior to theirs. What shall I tell you? I was all astonished; and in examining, part by part, this beautiful village, I was convinced of the justice and truth of all which Hermacintha and the prelate had said. I know not a happier; and he that is born in it, is sure to be the least miserable man in this world. The aged, and

the incurable have a certain asylum; and the rest, as soon as they are sick, are nursed by the amiable rose-bearers. No remedy is wanting, and a fairy seems to takes charge of the family, during the illness of the head of it. There are schools for the boys, and, as the women do not work at the hard labours of the field, they have time to bring up their daughters themselves, and each of the rose-bearers, during an hour or two every day, gives lessons to the girls of her acquaintance in writing and ciphering, but principally in needle-work. The magistrates of the village, who are under subjection to the seignior, all obey the orders of Hermacintha. Neatness and public peace are wonderfully preserved. The church is decorated with a sort of richness and elegant simplicity which inspires all with respect; and this is as it should be. There are, in this place three different communions; the Roman

Catholic, Reformed, and Lutheran; but this is scarcely perceptible, and the ministers of the gospel are the first to set the example of concord and brotherly love. Hermacintha allows but one bell for the three communions; and, to habituate the villagers to regard and believe themselves all fellow Christians, she has built the parish-church in such a manner, that each community has its own church in the same building, separated from the others by a wall, and with its distinct entrance. You know that Maria and Hermacintha are of the Roman church, while Julius is of the Reformed. This diversity of creed results from that which subsisted between their father and mother. The two sisters, mothers of Hermacintha and Maria, were Roman Catholics, and the father of my friend Julius was a Protestant.

The boys of the village receive a singular education. One of the masters of school accompanies their walks, superintends

their games, obliges them to keep themselves clean, and exercises them in races, dangerous sports, and works of the field. The kind of instruction is regulated entirely at the choice of the children.

A physician and a surgeon belong to the village, and are the same who are employed at the château. They look after the little hospital, and attend to all the villagers alike. They act in concert with the rose-bearers, who repect their science. They have at their disposal the linen, the laundry, the tailor, the cellar, and the bakehouse of the château. When any one is in real want of clothes or covering, or of better meat or drink than ordinary, the physicians order it, and the rose-bearers procure what they want from Hermacintha's.

On returning from our walk, we went into the church, where we found the whole village assembled. The place might have been taken for a boarding-

school, such was the gentleness and modesty of the appearance of the young women; the only difference was, that here nothing artificial nor affected.— They scarcely took any notice of us; our places were reserved, but were like all the rest. As I expressed my surprize that there was no *tribune*,* Hermacintha said, she wished neither to be diverted, nor to divert others, during her prayers; that all places, and all the faithful, were equal in the sight of God, and, in short, that it was turning the villagers from their duties, to show them their pretended *lord*, in the presence of the true one.

After service, we were led to the temple or pavilion. At the top of the hill, near the château, we found two gondolas. We embarked on the little river which runs through the park, and

* An elevated pew, either for the churchwarden, or the lord or seignior of the village.—Tr.

proceeded nearly a mile on the limpid stream, following its course along the top of the hills which extend to the middle of the gardens. From this height, you see the interior of the delicious landscape, and beyond, the towns, and the charming valley. At intervals, the voyage was shaded by groupes of beautiful trees, which are scattered along the banks, in such a manner as to moderate the ardour of the sun, without excluding the prospect.

Near the temple, which is not far from a little island formed by the river, where the level of the ground obliges it to divide itself into two branches, we terminated our navigation. We landed at a little port, made at a small expense. A multitude of swans covered the water, and surrounded the pavilion, on the top of which was perched the protectress stork. The isle which is below, is called the Isle of Rose-trees. On it are

assembled roses of many species, and the most beautiful colour. Of these roses, only three, for the crowned rose-bearers, are gathered in each year, and none but Hermacintha gathers them. The pavilion commands only the little valley of the rose-trees, and a small wood on the opposite bank of the river. It is surrounded by the most beautiful sward in the park. No enclosure protects it from the curious, but none dare intrude. We were surprised to find all the village gathered round, in irregular assembly, full of free and lively gaiety, but with the utmost decorum. The rose-bearers were in the pavilion; Hermacintha joined them, and all sat down, except the three new ones, who, without ribbons, and with no other roses than those in their cheeks, stood behind, with timidity. A moment after, there was singing, with equal harmony and simplicity, and without the aid of instruments. The words

related to the sorrows of love. I remember only as much as follows:

L'amour sans la vertu n'est que l'erreur des sens.
Love, without virtue, is but the wandering of the senses.

Oui, l'être le plus vil est la femme sans mœurs.
The lowest of creatures is a woman without virtue.

I did not fail to write down these words; but I can do no justice to the expressiveness and sweetness of the air. When this was finished, the games commenced with the new-married villagers. The marriages of the village are celebrated together, at this annual festival, in the presence of Hermacintha. They had previously been presented at church. Each husband was placed along the river, accompanied by his wife. The young men were pitched against each other in races, in leaping, and in climbing trees, in which presents had been hidden for the girls. Afterward came their turn; they had races among them-

selves, and afterwards brought presents to their husbands, such as a ribbon, a cravat, a hat, a pair of buckles, &c. Presently, music struck up; Hermacintha went alone to the island, and returned with the three most beautiful roses, and three superb girdles of red ribbon, and now the names of the three rose-bearers were proclaimed to all the crowd. Hermacintha attired them with the ribbons and roses, and, after embracing them, came down with them, and the ball commenced. Custom required that Hermacintha should dance with the three rose-bearers, habited in the same dress. This she did with that ease and grace which is so natural to her. Every one danced afterward, as he pleased. We all took part, and nothing struck me so much as the ease and proper behaviour of these good people. Shortly after, every one retired with his company. All the village was entertained by the rose-bearers, old and

new. According to the custom, the sick were served in the hospital, and every thing ceased at an early hour, after the new-married couples had been to visit and thank the minister. In the evening, several of the rose-bearers were of our party, which they embellished by their interesting conversation.

I am astonished, but I must acknowledge the entire success of the projects of the original Hermacintha!

Her opinion on gardens appeared to me singular enough to be reported to you. I amuse myself with criticising her system and plans, but I must confess that she completely triumphs. It is not upon the art of gardening, Corinna, that I pique myself; you know what that is in which I would be scientific, and for which end, a single word from your mouth suffices! But, in vain I seek to hear you for the second time; for six years I have sighed to no purpose. Will this foreign climate, into which you are

come, and which will soon see me at your feet, be less unfavourable?

Meantime, attend to what is nearly the opinion of the amiable Hollander upon gardens.

"I cannot comprehend," said she, "what guides you in your system upon gardens. Formerly, in France, you planned strait alleys, nicely shaven, and trees cut into shape; now, you adopt the English style, with winding alleys and artificial lawns, very costly, and often useless. Though I greatly prefer this latter sort of garden, I confess to you that I am at a loss to discover any certain rules belonging to these different theories; and mine is made up of parts, without entirely following the taste of any one else. I love Delille's poem, and its noble and harmonious lines; but he has no other guide than his own taste, and what appears to him most agreeable. This taken for the basis, every one may have different rules,

since nothing differs more than taste; what I mean is, that the rules which he gives, are not really rules. To be rules, it is requisite that their end and their motives should be indisputable. In ranging among scenes which are rural and truly enchanting, embellished without being tortured by the hand of agriculture, I began to be disgusted with my ancient gardens, in which, though art was kept out of sight, according to all the rules of Delille and others, I felt that there was something wanting; those beautiful parks, said I, which are so costly, cannot fall to the lot of a great number. What a shame, that these beautiful lawns, these delightful hills, do not provide for their own maintenance, and that of their possessor! I thought I saw those wealthy fools, who, to spread abroad a ridiculous and disproportioned luxury, deprive themselves of all real riches, and are always on the brink of ruin. In point of fact, those beautiful gardens

would presently be lost in disorder, without artificial aid. They are not of long duration; the heir of the founder, often, at the first shock of his fortune, is obliged to sacrifice to his necessities all this work of art, and all this pompous apparatus; and, by so doing, condemns his system, and declares the folly and the fallacy of his ideas. A beautiful garden, to my taste, is that which unites the useful with the agreeable, which feeds or enriches its proprietor, while it delights him; but which is so cultivated, arranged, and laboured, that its different soils produce all which they can produce; that is to say, the most conformable with those beautiful landscapes which nature, left to herself, often sets before us. Uncultivated at first, the prudent cultivator has neither opened paths, nor cut away thorns, nor removed the branches, nor made any other change, but only as it became necessary to his business; he has not stopped

short of all which he could draw from the ground, and he has done nothing beyond it. In short, according to my opinion, that spot of ground which is the best and the most agreeably cultivated, is the most agreeable garden."

I ought not to forget an institution, or rather colony, situate at a small distance from the park, but in the Betuve, on the other side of the Lec, in the centre of the seigniory. Hermacintha and Julius conducted me thither, after having made me visit the house near the château, in which are maintained twelve young female orphans, educated through their bounty, and under the eye of Hermacintha. They consider themselves her relations, and are treated as if they were so. "You will find," said Hermacintha, "in your journey in Holland, a considerable number of houses of charity. Every town, every village, has its own; add to this, every religious community, and, beside, a large proportion

of private establishments. The beneficence of our nation is very great, and worthy of serving for a model; it would be perfect, if all that belongs to this object had a central direction. You will, doubtlessly, in visiting them, observe this vice. You will not approve of the great number of particular controllers and managers, nor of the splendour of the buildings. You will criticise, I am sure, a custom which I strongly dislike, that of dressing the orphans in a manner so ridiculously distinctive; at Utrecht, for example; half the dress is blue, and the other half white; this is what I have called the livery of beneficence.

"But do not think that this ostentation belongs to the national character; it is only a consequence of our extreme attachment to old customs. To form a just idea of the liberality of the nation, we must observe it on occasion of misfortune, or extraordinary disaster;

such as the ravages of inundations, tempests, warfare, sickness, fires, &c. You will then see our Hollanders, whom you think so cold and calculating, look with fortitude on the most lingering death, lavish life, and a fortune, the fruit of the toil, the wisdom, and the frugality of many generations, for the least of their fellow-countrymen, without distinction of religion, of condition, or of fortune, and taking always for the measure of their bounty, not what they are able to give away, but what the unfortunate want. Hence, that inconsistence apparent to the eyes of strangers, who cannot understand the strict economy of Dutch families, compared with their prodigious generosity to the afflicted. The cause is in their persuasion, that they ought not to use their fortune for more than the supply of a moderate degree of abundance; that the remainder ought to be preserved carefully, as being the produce of the pains and the sweat of their

forefathers; that to the unfortunate, while in health, they ought to give nothing but their time and exertions, but that they cannot do too much for the aged, the incurable, the orphan, the sick, and especially for the victims of public calamities, such as inundations, tempests, and reverses of trade; disasters to which we accustomed, on a soil which may be said to be floating on the sea, which we maintain only by force of art, and which Providence seems to protect, to preserve to the continent a barrier against the Northern Ocean. As to the rest, it is needless to point out to you the faults of my countrymen; they are sufficiently glaring, and you will observe them without difficulty; but I forewarn you, that their good qualities and virtues are more concealed, and essentially modest and unobtrusive. There are few nations, perhaps none, which have more intrinsic merit, but none have less the art of setting it forth; they

evince, on this point, the most extreme indifference—perhaps through pride, perhaps through philosophy. You will find in this very thing the whole source of their defects, if you add to it our continual dangers, on and under a treacherous soil and climate, which render us necessarily cold, slow, and resigned; and further, the radical vice of our political constitution, by which we count almost as many different states as there are provinces, cities, and seigniories, whence all our views and all our measures are narrowed, and by which we shall one day suffer, unless we previously find a remedy.

"You see," said Hermacintha, showing us a pretty little village, "the colony of Martha's Deugd, of which I will tell you the history. In the year 1744, there was a terrible inundation, the dikes of the Whaal were broken, the Betuve was overflowed, and all the land belonging to our seigniory was particularly da-

maged. There was in the neighbourhood a rich landholder, whose youngest daughter loved, and was beloved by my father. Young, amiable, and virtuous, her birth alone opposed her marriage, to which our good grand-parents refused their consent. Their house was one of the first victims of the inundation. My father, young, active, vigorous, and bold, saved his young mistress by swimming; but Martha soon perceived that her mother was left behind in the greatest danger. They returned toward the ruins of the house. My father loaded himself with the double burden of Martha and her mother; but he could not go very far, and reached with much difficulty the nearest tree, against which all the three supported themselves. They were not long in this situation before they perceived that the tree yielded to their weight, which was joined with the force of the current against it. My father still tried to save the two ladies, but he was

too much fatigued and enfeebled to make this possible. Meantime, the tree inclined more and more, and was about to give way, when Martha, with a voice of inspiration, commanded her lover to save her parent, whose feet she reached and kissed, and then plunged headlong into the flood. The tree rose again; my father would have thrown himself after his mistress, but her mother fainted in his arms, and prevented him.

"While this happened, one came to their assistance: it was the father of the worthy Tolmer, now steward of the seigniory. Martha's mother lost not only her daughter, but her husband, and all her possessions; all submerged at once. She could not sustain her misfortune, and died in the house of my ancestors, bequeathing to them her children."

"Imagine," continued Hermacintha, "whether or not my father must have been attached to this family! It consisted of four young girls and two little boys.

My parents took on themselves the care of their interests; they were respectably married, and settled at the place where you see the colony is built. But it seems as if there were families made for prosperity, and others always to be unfortunate in this world. The new village was burnt to the ground a few years before my father's death, and the greater part of the inhabitants perished in the frightful conflagration. Only the little girls, to the number of twelve, who are at this moment at school near the château, were spared. These children were educated under the direction of my mother. The devoured village is rebuilt round the tree at which Martha perished, and which you may still see rising over a dozen farm-houses. My father left me in charge to pay this sacred debt of love. The twelve children grow under my eye, under those of Mary and Mademoiselle Melrode, and of our good prelate. When they are married, they will inherit the

twelve houses which you see, and re-people the village of Martha's Deugd."

You will probably not think that I have abused your patience, in relating to you this extraordinary and pathetic adventure.

I am forced to acknowledge that Hermacintha is no pedant in her original opinions. She is what she seems. Her gardens are the proof and the model of her system. If I were to explain it entirely, I should be afraid of wearying her, who, in order to embellish the most unfavoured situations, has only need to give them her presence. Those which shall speedily see me at her feet will be the most perfect in my eyes, in spite of Hermacintha and Delille.

LETTER IX.

From Hermacintha to Adelaide.

At length our Parisian is arrived, and by his hands you will receive this letter. My brother and Maria have requested his return, and his presence on their day of marriage, which has been kept back on his account, and will be so a short time longer. Adolphus is obliged to go to Amsterdam by his father's orders. He will afterward wait upon your parents. I beg of you not to let him stop long, that so the happiness of my friends may not be again deferred. I feel the liveliest sorrow that you cannot join us; nevertheless, I have not lost all hope. I have charged Adolphus with my invitations, and with my intreaties to your parents.

LETTER X.

From Julius to Adolphus.

It is now a fortnight since you left us for Amsterdam and North Holland, and yet you are not come! I cannot wait long; dear Adolphus, you must forgive me. The moment is fixed; it will be immediately after we shall have received a reply, which we expect every hour, from Lisle, in Flanders, where you know the greater part of our substance is. Come, then, if you really take a part in the happiness of your friend.

LETTER XI.

From Adolphus to Julius.

SHOULD I have remained so long without rejoining you, had there not been a real impossibility in the way? Far from being in a state to travel, I am keeping my bed, in considerable suffering; and it is only with difficulty that I can write. An adventure of the most singular description has cured me for ever of my fatal passion. I love Corinna no more; that is fixed. She is a coquette and a fool. Hear me!

It seems that this journey was to try me in more than one way: I have received more than one lesson.

On reaching Amsterdam, I was to lodge at M. Van Welhelm's, on the Heerengragt. I alighted, and found Co-

rinna on a visit, with her little court. I went home with them. I returned to supper at ten o'clock, and I sought the more willingly my society at this house, because my hosts were intimate with Corinna. She received me better than ever, and I became her chevalier. Your dear countrymen are not fond of the society of women. Though the lovely Polonese was surrounded every evening by a brilliant circle of strangers, I was very useful to her in her daily rounds and promenades. I have remarked, that the Hollanders much admire the beauty and superior graces of my countrywoman. The sweet familiarity and enchanting wit of this new Circe returned my first expressions with all the ardour which she had formerly done. My head growing inflamed, I became very urgent in my suit with Corinna. So far from being offended, she was pleased with my warmth, and would even persuade me that she returned it. Could it be be-

lieved? She received the attentions of the most elegant young men, and was surrounded by the most brilliant circle, and I became daily more familiar, and less intimate. This, which you think a paradox, is nevertheless truth. She was less reserved with me, but more indifferent; and, without manifesting toward her new acquaintances any real interest, of which I do not believe her susceptible, she distinguished them by that air of eagerness and curiosity, which, among coquettes, so often takes the appearance of solicitude and friendship. I became jealous and impatient. One day, as we were riding out together, I thought her perfection itself, for she seemed to betray sensibility. She doubted the reality, the solidity of my affection: "What proof can I give you?" said I; will you accept my life?"—I was beside myself. She possesses a beauty, a grace incomparable—judge what she appeared to me at this moment, when, languishingly

turned toward me, her beautiful head, and especially her eyes, seemed to express sensibility! We were passing over the bridge at Amstel.—"Life!" said she, with looks full of fire, "ah! hear the language of falsehood! you are like the rest: you would be finely caught, if I were to take you at your word; if, for example, I were to tell you at once to throw yourself into the river?"—"Give the word," said I, with fury, and without knowing what I did. "Well," said she, "let us see," testifying the most eager curiosity; "let us see whether you love me!" She stopped.—Must I confess it, my friend? I was mad enough to obey her! I was no longer myself; seduced, a prey to a thousand sentiments, which the single sight of Corinna excited, I no longer saw river nor parapet. It seemed, since the love and the will of Corinna called me to the precipice, that I must find happiness be-

neath it; and, in spite of the resistance of my horse, I plunged into the river. The cold made me recollect my situation. A thousand cries of alarm entirely recalled my attention. I struggled to escape, while my horse, at a distance from me, was swept away by the tide. I was picked up by a turf-boat, without other injury than a few contusions, a momentary stupefaction, and no small distress of mind. I was placed in a carriage; and, when I returned to M. Van Wilhelm's, I reflected upon Corinna, and felt that I revolted from her, and that I was cured of my passion. I asked for post-horses, and set out for Adelaide's father's, where I related all my follies. I wrote these words to Corinna:—"I have been fool enough to throw away my life and my heart upon the greatest coquette of coquettes; but I am not sufficiently such ever to see her again, nor to regret a wicked and insensible

heart like yours."—She was content to ask what news of me, and this was all the answer.—What a woman!

Since my arrival here, I feel severe pains. The boat which saved my life occasioned me some contusions, of which I was not sensible at first.

LETTER XII.

From the same to the same.

Is it levity, that I have already forgotten Corinna, and am charmed with Adelaide? Less lively, more solid, with not less beauty and grace, she has, what Corinna wants, a gentleness and endearing sensibility. Since it is my parents' wish that we should be united, I feel that I shall one day obey them without much difficulty; and I repeat it, my friend, this is no levity in me. Like Julius, I had early *in myself* the image of her whom I should love, her to whom I wished wholly to belong. Several times I have deceived myself; several times I have been obliged to change. Anna, Athenaïs, Angiolina, Corinna, &c. all seemed to hold out to me the reality

of my chimera. Is it my fault, if they deceived me, if they were no more than false Adelaides?

I have visited, with this family, the famous villages of Brock and Sardam. We embarked on lake or sea of Leyden; then entered the Spaaren, and arrived a few hours afterward at the sluices of Spaarendam, crossing the city of Harlem. I am reconciled, Julius, to your flat and humid country, since I have seen the banks of the Vecht, between Utrecht and Amsterdam, and those of the Spaaren. I admire that crowd of villas which line both the banks; the gardens small, but covered with a vigorous and cheerful vegetation, hiding beneath its verdure the sameness of the water which, in a thousand canals, intersects the soil. It was Sunday, and every family was in an alcove or summer-house, which it is the custom to build on the edge of the canals and roads. I saw the good people, peacefully smoking, and taking their tea in the

midst of their wives and children, the latter playing on the grass. They are happy; or, at least, they have greatly the air of tranquillity and happiness. Near Harlem, that beautiful wood which seems to surround it, and further on, the downs of Zandvoort, create a variety which I had not expected in so flat a country. On the opposite side, the horizon terminates with Amsterdam. The lofty steeples of that immense city seem to rise out of the water, to direct the eye, which would else wander vaguely round the expanse. Arrived at Spaarendam, the picture changes. The numerous saw-mills assembled round the Sardam, show the crowd of their demi-sails like a high wood, or rather like the masts of a fleet at anchor.

The gulf of the Y, calm, and surrounded by land on three sides, seems the safest and largest port in the world.

I have seen the hut in which Peter the Great worked for six months. It is,

without contradiction, the most miserable sailor's dwelling possible. It resembles the cabin of a ship. It is said, that a monument is about to be erected on this spot of glorious memory for Peter, and still more for your country. I congratulate you upon it; for it will mark a memorable epoch of your grandeur and prosperity.

Broek astonished me, though I had heard you frequently speak of it, and though my expectations were raised before-hand. I thought I was in the new and glistening gallery of a handsome house, when I found myself in the streets of the village. The sides are formed by houses regularly built; and painted and arranged in a manner and tone charming and picturesque. At first, we saw nobody in the village; for all were gone to church. We walked that way, and met a crowd which was coming out, and which looked on us with indifference. A few instants after, every one was in

his house, and the streets were again a solitude; only the *klappermans* were walking slowly in them. The less rich of the seigniors in this village are worth a million of guilders each; and they marry among each other, in order that their wealth may not go out of Broek. We succeeded in gaining admission to the interior of one of the houses, but it was not of the first class, for, in that case we should have had much more difficulty. It was inhabited by an old peasant, who laboured under an asthma. In talking with him, we learned, that he paid more than half his income in taxes. —"You pay a great deal!"—"How can it be helped?" said he; "people pay every where; it is necessary for the support of our country."—"Your wife," said I, "seems to be mistress, and govern the house."—"She is both a good wife and good mother. May she survive me, and govern the house and her children a long time after me! May my boys find

wives like their mother!" This calm, rational, resigned, and satisfied tone of a man in years, and afflicted with an incurable disorder, moved us all. He presented to us what remained of his children. "I have only had eight," said he, "and four died young." I persuaded myself that a large number of children was a proof of a virtuous life, seeing that this excellent man had had so many. Nevertheless, I saw him bent under the weight of years, and, beside, attacked by a deadly disease. At our departure I sympathized with him: "Are you happy?" said I.—"Yes," replied he, "for my wife and children are well." Who could have answered better? How much philosophy, delicacy, good principle, and rationality, in these words! His boys were well-grown, strong, and robust; good, but not polished. His daughters, true North-Hollanders, fair as the milk of their cows; their manners cold, their eyes large, their eye lashes

long, their hair flaxen. When I thought of their innocent and indolent air, their dress *prudishly* close, and almost every where in double folds, I had some difficulty in conceiving, how they would contrive, at a future day, to lose that frozen aspect in the eyes of their husbands; and I was totally at a loss to imagine the beginning of their courtships! But I was wrong; perhaps they open the road to intimacy, by giving themselves up to indifference. They have much the air of *Madonnas*, with their white handkerchiefs thrown upon their heads, fastened round the forehead with a golden circle, and ornamented on each temple with a little square looking-glass, of the size of a double-ducat.

Another thing struck me in your North-Holland. At Broek I saw, at the back of each house, a door carefully closed, and I demanded its use. "It is the Door of Ceremony,"* I was an-

* Pronk deur.

swered; "it is opened only three times for the same person of the family: at his birth, at his marriage, and at his death." "I have passed it twice," said the mistress of the house; "the second time very gaily. When I pass it again, it will be for ever." Pathetic and philosophical custom! What a modest and eloquent manner of warning others, of warning ourselves, of the brevity of the voyage, and of its approaching termination! It seems to me, that this door must weigh for ever on the mind of a North-Hollander. In his place, I should be in fear continually, to see it open, either for myself or for my friends!

At Amsterdam, my dear friend, I received a little lesson which I am very ready to acknowledge and to forgive in your fellow-countrymen. I went to visit the Exchange with Mr. Van Wilhelm, and, as we were returning, I spoke with pleasure of the good faith of the Hollanders; I praised the fidelity and probity

of which I had just seen a striking example. A few minutes before, Mr. Van Wilhelm was accosted by his broker, who asked his consent to buy a large quantity of public property. He consented, and the broker, in conjunction with the broker of the vendor, took a note of the sum, in their pocket books. After we had seen the apartments, we descended, and M. Van Wilhelm received the disagreeable news, that the price of the goods had so fallen, and still continued to fall, that he would lose to an enormous amount, if he paid the price which had been asked but an instant before. "I cannot do otherwise," replied he; "it is a great misfortune;" and he paid, in my presence, in good bills of exchange, for the goods, though they were so fallen, that every moment they were offered at a lower rate than before. Nevertheless, here was no contract, nor promise legally authenticated, but only a consent feebly expressed. One of my

countrymen, still more light and thoughtless, my dear Julius, than I, because he does not know your family nor you, was at Madame Van Wilhelm's party, and allowed himself some raillery on the reputed avarice and love of money of the Hollanders. My countryman is known as an active man in business. He discounts bills, and has ruined many of the dupes who have trusted in him ; he is one of a numerous class of men, hardly capable of a blush. He was put, however, to a severe trial. "Sir," said Madame Van Wilhelm, "understand, that if we are given to the love of money, we have at least the good principle to love only our own." My companion was silent ; I blushed for him, and we changed the discourse.

My cure advances, my dear Julius, and very soon I shall be with you. But I cannot hope to witness your happiness; I have already caused you too many delays. We will take part in it here, by

celebrating the happy day. Meanwhile, I confess that I think you very young to become a *husband*, and I pity my friend sincerely, that he is about to become a father of a family, a man, without ever being a young man; without having passed his youth in the pleasures and the tempests which follow in their train! As for me, I am older than you; I have profited of life; I have enjoyed my youth; and yet, at last, I shall become a husband only in self-defence.

LETTER XIII.

From Julius to Adolphus.

THE village, the château, the park, all seem preparing to share in my felicity. Mary alone has been, for some days, a recluse. I, also, have recourse to our holy religion; for I have need of its solid and true, though severe beauty, to temper my ardour, and moderate my impatient love. Our good vassals rejoice in my happiness, as if it related to their brother or their child. Since my marriage has been determined on, I have breakfasted every morning with Hermacintha and Maria, and it is here that she teaches me to value my incomparable bride. She is proud of her. What a woman, my friend, is that of whom Maria is the work! In this little circle, a

modest ease, an air of happiness and hope, of gaiety and seriousness, each lends a charm even to silence. When Maria and I speak of our projects, I dwell on the particulars, and please myself in guessing her sentiments ;—she blushes, and, in few words, almost always gives her approbation. Hermacintha lets us go on; and then, suddenly, as if she were our enemy, she strives, by her observations, by her amiable but biting irony, to bring us to plain notions. Nobody seems to me to have more romance than herself; and yet she employs herself only in recovering us from any fantastic ideas which we may happen to take up.

Every evening, we receive company. Hermacintha seems willing to introduce us to the world gently. Perhaps she does this to try us. There never was society more amiable nor more brillant than that which our neighbourhood affords. Useless trouble! labour lost! Though beauties more lovely, more

pure, more engaging than Maria, if such can possibly exist, should present themselves before me, could I be pleased with them? I think none beautiful, good, nor lovely, but as they resemble Maria; and all that differs from her, is to me as if it did not exist. Hermacintha is to carry us to-morrow to the Countess de Recht, who lives near us. She is a woman celebrated for her beauty; but something too fashionable. I am ignorant why Hermacintha, who has hitherto denied herself to the world, is now desirous of leading us into it.

LETTER XIV.

Hermacintha to Adelaide.

I HAVE seen the celebrated Corinna; she, with other strangers, was at the Countess de Recht's, where I have introduced my young charges.

The first thing Corinna said to us was, that she loved a country-life. A country-life! what an expression! Persons may love a country-life as they cherish indolence; as, in marriage, there are some who like it for the means it affords to enjoy greater liberty, and to abuse it. One must be unhappily constituted, to fix in every thing upon the reverse of good sense.

We went afterward into the park. I gave my arm to Julius. Corinna, several women of fashion, the Countess de

Recht, and the young duchess, her friend and neighbour, accompanied us. You know that the latter is also a friend of ours. Prodigiously rich, she employs her immense fortune principally in carrying elegance to excess, and in cultivating the fashions. In addition, she shines by the side of Corinna, and you may judge the rest! Her two nieces accompanied her; the one of fourteen years, and the other of fifteen; both have the graces in perfection. The duchess passes for the finest woman in Europe; and she would die with chagrin if another dared to dispute her rank. In the evening there was a magnificent fête. You guess my projects. Every thing breathed an air of pleasure and satisfaction full of danger; the sky seconded my purpose; never was the atmosphere so fine, so agreeable and pure.

The park is large and handsome, but regular and monotonous. We were seated in a temple; and observing how

much the duchess and Corinna engaged the regards of Julius, "What is the matter?" said I. "They are beautiful; but tell me why it is, that the impression these beauties make upon me cannot reach my heart, and touch it?"

Corinna has the voice of a syren. She was begged to sing; a lyre was in the temple; and her song ravished the circle which surrounded her, and especially the male part of it. Conversation followed, and Corinna related a story with infinite grace. Her narrative attracted general attention. Of all her perfections, those of her neck, her arms, and her hands, are admirable. She danced the shawl-dance exquisitely. All the gentlemen were in extasy with so many charms, and lavished upon these ladies ridiculous praises.

I replied as by habit to those which were addressed to me; and Maria, while these ladies, given up to gaiety and the desire of shining, were endeavouring to

please; Maria withdrew herself, pressed close to me, and wrapping herself in her shawl, sought, but in vain, to hide her beauty. She did not escape the praises of the gentlemen; and I forsook her for the first time, for mischief sake. If you had seen what colour mounted into her cheeks, and how her trouble betrayed her modesty! She replied to the compliments in a manner the most laconic. When a gentleman had finished, she thanked those who spoke to her with a modest and graceful curtesy, which pleased, but astonished them. I was equally surprized at the manner in which she got out of her difficulty; I had feared that her embarrassment might be painful; but she surmounted it with as much grace as presence of mind. "My dear child," said I, "you have replied to so many pretty things only by a curtesy."—"It is all they are worth," said she, laughing.

At dinner, Julius was placed between

Corinna and the duchess. He talked by turns with each of them, in the most lively manner. I observed, that from time to time, he blushed. I was in doubt, for a moment, of his resistance to the attractions of so many charms. I had begun to be in fear; when, casting my eyes on a glass which happened to be opposite my brother, I saw that it was the looks of Maria which caused his emotion. He sought them, and met them, every minute. Astonishing peculiarity! that insatiable desire of seeing each other, which torments two lovers. Maria and Julius were unable this evening, as on every other day, to turn their thoughts upon any thing but the one the other.

To the great surprise of our young friends, the assembly, already so brilliant, became more so. Maria displayed a North Holland *sang-froid*, and I was proud, I confess, Adelaide, to see my experiment succeed so well; agree

with me, that I had reason. My young brother, and my dear Maria, both in their youth, found themselves in their place, as if accustomed to the most brilliant company. Be not astonished to find, in the country, in our little Gascony, since you please so to denominate Guelderland, so large an assembly of the *beau monde*. I profited of a fortunate circumstance, the celebration, at the château of Recht, of the birth-day of the countess-dowager. The first dancers in the world, Mesdames Gardel and Dupont, on their passage to Amsterdam, had made a stay there; and, to add to this, Corinna was there also.

I was in the wrong, to say that my friends were in their place in the brilliant circle; both distinguished themselves from the crowd. Their pure souls seemed to betray themselves in their exterior. Without partiality, I remarked in them often during the evening, *a something better* than in the multitude

of young people, perhaps more brilliant. What was that *something better?* I know not; but my remark was also made by several members of the diplomatic body, who had come from Amsterdam, to be present at the countess's fête.

A fresh room was opened, and it reminded me of the Opera at Paris; but all these charms, all these illusions, did not even flurry the hearts of our lovers. When every body applauded a ballet of Mesdames Gardel and Dupont, and praised it with reason, and even Julius appeared enchanted, and gave himself up in imagination to the beautiful ballet of Telemachus, I told him that Maria had forgotten her bouquet, at the bottom of the park, where she had been so much. It was a great way off; but he was gone immediately, without giving any further attention to the dance. He had cast a look on Maria, a smile, and vanished quickly. He did not rejoin us till after the ballet, and when the ball

had recommenced. The company condoled with him for not having seen the end of the ballet: "Do I regret the conclusion?" said he: "no; I have found what she had lost."

At the ball, Maria danced only with her cousin. She did not understand waltzing, nor did she like that dance; she was asked a hundred foolish questions; "I do not dance it," replied she, invariably, and unable to comprehend that further questions could be asked her, after she had said what was her resolution and her taste. Though I was myself the inspirer of these, I made a thousand efforts in vain, to induce her to depart from them; and yet, you will believe it, Adelaide, with difficulty, I was not able to succeed. Maria possesses at once, a heart and understanding the most solid.

Proverbs and charades were afterward played with that ill taste and immodest assurance too common at this

day. "Oh! I do not like this," said Maria; "to enter into familiarity, and resign yourself to persons whom you scarcely know, is paying a bad compliment to your friends; I shall never follow the example; I would no more treat strangers as friends, than friends as strangers." I proposed to her to make one at these amusements; but she refused, with a sort of indignation, and went to find her cousin, to whom she said, that I loved her less than I had used to do. "What have I done, my Hermacintha," said she to me, afterward, with emotion, "that you should abandon me to these people, whose strange ways I do not comprehend?" Julius expressed himself more strongly, and both insisted upon leaving the party.

We withdrew. I was so happy, that I did not wholly communicate how satisfied I was with them. Maria, in particular, in wishing me good night, embraced me with that filial tenderness

which I formerly felt for the best of mothers, and which is even, perhaps, still softer. Maria is nearer my own age; she is a real friend, and a friend for ever. I felt her tears flow on my cheek; tears of happiness must be different from others, for my own also seemed to me very pleasant!

The next day, I took them to Bommel; but you certainly will not guess why? to visit the public establishments, and particularly the hospitals. We went in the evening to sleep in the town, and employed almost all the following day in the inspection. What reflections did I not hear from them, at the workhouse, the foundling hospital, the hospital for incurables, and that for lunatics!

A few days before, I had begged my cousin, Count de Bilandt, to call on me, and we had selected in concert the persons to whom we were to pay particular attention. What a difference between this day and that passed at the

Countess de Recht's. Here, Julius forgot Maria, and she forgot her cousin and me; both were wholly occupied with the unhappy, at the sight of whom they were troubled, and sighed. Maria asked the story of each, and was afflicted that she could not heal them, and restore all to happiness.

At the hospital for foundlings, we saw a young mother, as beautiful as an angel. Many persons were gathered around her; we put some questions to her; she answered with a hoarse voice, audacious looks, and insolent language. "How horrible!" cried we all three at once. "She is of a very good family," added M. Bilandt; "her sister, as handsome as she, is the delight of her parents, and the admiration of the town in which she lives, through her virtues, her gentleness, and her education." "But how horrible is this one!" said Mary. "Good God! what a difference virtue, or the want of

it, can place between two individuals!" This was the reflection I was waiting for, and I took care to add nothing to it. I inquired the history of this woman; Maria approached her, and she embraced Maria roughly, while the latter, trembling, and afraid, sought refuge in my arms, striving to hide the traces of the embrace of the unhappy creature. "Hermacintha," said she, with emotion, and waiting my answer with anxiety, "I have embraced her!" I understood her emotion, and hastened to obliterate, with my cheek the traces from which she revolted.

It would be tedious to give you all the details. At the hospital for lunatics, she was terrified. Julius inquired into the methods of cure, and general treatment. There was a young man whose mind had been alienated by love. Maria saw him with dread. Julius examined him attentively. This unfortunate person is of a handsome figure;

He utters only these words: "She—always—I love her—no—yes." He uttered a cry on seeing Maria; looked at her in a frightful manner; and then, putting one hand on his forehead, and the other on his heart, "No—she—" said he; and seated himself in a corner, according to his usual habit. We learned his promised bride had died at the moment of marriage. "Does unfortunate love produce this effect?" said Maria. "Yes," said I, "when it does not cause death." "Did he love truly?" said Julius.—"I doubt it not," replied I.—"No," replied Maria, "he would have died; for he had no hope left."

At the hospital for incurables, Maria became a perfect nurse; she pressed around the sufferers, and without asking the least question, without embarrassing herself with Julius or me, she served them with a zeal, a pleasure, and a skill, inconceivable in a young person who saw such a spectacle for the first time.

She took notes of the wants of all, and her useful beneficence was very costly to us. She did not think it much, but I shall be careful to let her know its amount. On our return, "Cousin," said Maria, "how pleased I am! What a satisfaction to remove the wants of these poor people!" I asked leave for her, of the burgomaster, M. Baffleur, to deliver all the prisoners for debt, on her wedding-day. "Why wait?" said Maria; "let me do it directly," and I yielded.

During the three hours which it took to return home, nobody said a word of pleasure, nor of marriage. They sighed from time to time. "There are incurables every where," said Julius. "Forsaken children," added Maria. "O Hermacintha! you ought to belong to all; and yet we talk only of those whom we have seen." Maria recalled to my memory the names and almost features of all the unhappy persons we had left.

We parted in the evening, without speaking of marriage. The next morning, Maria and I breakfasted together alone. I spoke of the long-desired day, and she drew back the conversation to the visits of the evening. Her questions had no end. Astonished that she had retained all the names, and all the particulars, I asked how she had accomplished it; she showed me a little book; she had passed a great part of the night in setting down the names, with observations.

I sent for Julius and Mademoiselle de Melrode, and we ascended together the great terrace of the château. You know that my father had the fancy to plant several trees on it. Under the shadow of this paternal roof, I declared to them the consent of my parents to their union, and gave them the blessing which they gave us with their dying hands. Mademoiselle de Melrode read, on this occasion, the passage of the letter of my

parents which accompanies their will; and, after a short prayer, and having embraced them, we returned within, to occupy ourselves no more on any thing but the preparations. Nothing is in question now, but to hasten the day of happiness of our friends. To-morrow will see them united; I shall see their blissful day!

The passage of the letter runs thus:—"At their last trial, Hermacintha, recollect, that it ought to be the result of your cares, and decisive of their success. For the first time, you will lead them suddenly into the great world, into society the most elegant and brilliant; and immediately afterward, make them witnesses of the miseries of humanity, of the sick, and the unfortunate. If, at the first spectacle, all that which dazzles their eyes interests not their hearts; if none of these illusions alienate Julius from Maria, nor her from him; if, on the contrary, they seek to draw still nearer

to each other in the midst of this great world; if they find themselves in a natural attitude, and not misplaced, assure yourself, dear child, that in that moment itself we give our approbation to your cares; from the other world, if it is permitted to us, we will renew our blessings, and you will answer to us for your success, and for the hearts of our children. If, after this trial, you lead them to the hospitals, and to the beds of the sick, and if there, though in the presence of each other, they reciprocally forget each other for some hours, and think nothing of their loves, be assured that all is complete; you triumph. Bless, at that moment, our two children, in our name and in yours; you, who are their mother; and assure them that they are capable of withstanding time, absence, and misfortune; especially if your friendship and superior judgment remains with them always."

I am, perhaps, wrong in communi-

cating to you things which contain expressions in my praise; but I must falsify writings to omit them, an act to which I have always a repugnance.—Beside, I love to report the praises of my parents and my children; they teach me what I ought to endeavour to be. Never have my friends concealed from me the evil I have done; and those only have a right to praise us, who dare blame us for our faults.

LETTER XV.

From Julius to Adolphus.

The answer which we have so long expected is at length arrived. The day, my dear Adolphus, is fixed. I am obliged to go to Lisle, to sign certain papers, and go through other formalities, necessary to the arrangements which my sister insists upon my making, as to my own fortune, and Maria's. But this will detain me only a few hours. I set out to-day, Sunday. I have seven days for performing my journey; I reckon upon returning on Friday, and thus surprizing the ladies, who will not expect me till Saturday evening. Adieu, then; I did not like to go without informing you of it. I go gaily. What should I not do, to reach the happy Sunday which is coming!

LETTER XVI.

From Maria to Hermacintha.

O MY sister! we are at length at the end of this long week. In a few hours Saturday will begin. Julius's letter assures us that he will be here early; that all formalities are complied with; that his passport will delay him but only for a few instants.

Arrived at this solemn moment of my life, of which I am unable to think with confidence, I have need of conversing with you, of opening my soul to you, and thanking you for all that you have done for me. I have had the misfortune never to know the tenderness of a father or a mother. Yours, my cousin, has so well supplied its place, that I can now understand and value all the extent of

the misfortune which I should have been condemned, but for the best of uncles, but for my aunt, and especially but for you. Receive the lively thanks of a heart which is wholly yours and Julius's. I am your work; enjoy it, by keeping me always near you, if I deserve it, if I turn out as I should; and, if not, keep me near you, that I may become what I ought to be. Be always my guardian angel; it is under this title that I am about to open my heart to you. You love me; you take some satisfaction in your Maria. I wish, at this awful epoch, to ask you, whether I am worthy of your love; to confide my fears, and to examine myself, and to lay bare before your eyes the most secret corners of my heart.

I am at the height of happiness. To-morrow evening I shall be joined with Julius, I shall bear your name, I shall be your sister! Ah! may he be always happy! Tell me what I shall do to

insure his happiness for ever? I have laid my plan; see whether it is good; direct me how to alter it, if needful. I remember always, that a marriage cannot be happy, unless one of the two is entirely submissive to the other; unless there be but one will, one head. Happy to render obedience to Julius, regard him as my support, my counsel, my true friend, I will bow my pride before his reason. You have talked to me of the difficulty of preserving a constant agreement, with the best dispositions possible. If the daily habits and inclinations of the one, you say, do not resemble those of the other; if one is pleased, where the other is wearied, they must take their separate paths! Oh! no, no, Hermacintha, never; you have taught me to limit my desires, if to limit them, is to fix them only on true enjoyments. Yes, though so young, though a prey to a sort of delirium, I feel more than ever, that our happiness lies within

the circle of our duties; and how can it be otherwise? Do not our duties comprehend the exercise of our dearest affections; those which we owe to our family and to the unfortunate? My duty is, to find my happiness in my husband, and I feel that I shall do so always. Though he should cease to love me, though he should cease to be amiable, would the good Julius cease to command my esteem; he, who was the friend of my childhood, my sole companion, and, in a word, the brother of Hermacintha? Ah! if he could cease to love me, I feel that I could never change: I should but consider myself as dead, and only weep over the shortness of my existence. Unalterable in my destiny, armed against the dangers of life, but not shrinking from those which, so to say, are prescribed to us, I should have nothing to do but devote myself to my husband. If I always forgot myself, your difficulty would disappear; for

there would be, in reality, but one will in the house.

You have no need to recommend, that I should be very slow in forming new acquaintances. I have always thought, that it was a folly to go in search of friends among strangers, whom chance or interest brings in our way, while heaven has given us parents, brothers, and sisters, whose character we know, whose qualities we have proved so often, and especially our children, who, by education and by birth, are doubly our own work. You have thought so, O my mother! I am consoled for being an orphan, since heaven made me born your cousin and your pupil. If Julius and I could ever disunite ourselves, we should re-unite through the identity of our affection, our gratitude and our respect for you. I have often heard you say, that the greater part of our miseries arise from the want of calculation, and nothing appears to me more true. It has

sometimes happened to me, I am obliged to confess, to be pleased away from you. It seemed to me, then, Hermacintha, that the lectures you gave me, and even your society itself, fatigued me. But, when I returned to both, when I began to feel their excellence, how my former pleasures appeared insipid, wearisome, and ridiculous! I could have blushed at them; while the true ones diffused in me, not an unruly pleasure, but a gentle and progressive contentment, a consoling balm which attached me to life by all the faculties of my soul. I will confess, that I have sometimes played a trick upon myself. To return to you or to my duties, I promised myself to leave you in a moment, if I grew weary; but it never happened that I did so.

Julius and I, from our infancy, never imagined happiness but where it really is, in one's family—in what is called *domestic happiness*. I shall often be

less reserved with Julius than heretofore; but, for the rest, every thing will be the same as now. Believe me, my sister, Julius's happiness is assured; death alone can destroy us both.

I shall always remember your rules of decency and precaution. I shall regulate my time still more economically than at present. I shall be serious and reserved in the world, and myself at home. You, Julius, and Adelaide, whom you love so well, when she is here, will be all my family. Do not fear that I shall suffer myself to be drawn insensibly into the pleasures of the world; Julius will be the soul of my happiness, and I, that of his house. I am too indolent not to be unaffected. I know not whether I have the best taste, but I am sure, at least, that I have a delicate one. I am difficult; all that is vulgar and gross revolts me; for I am your work. I aspire to the glorious title of mother of a family. I am only at embellishing my house in the eyes of my husband, of rendering it,

in his view, the most agreeable of abodes; of smoothing, to those about me, the road to happiness; in a word, to imitate you, at an humble distance.

Filled with sentiments of extreme felicity, I have need to pour my heart into your bosom. I can feel, now, how much you have been in the right. Your reward, the sole worthy of you, is that of having formed two hearts, capable of loving you, and of appreciating your work.

I have fulfilled the duties prescribed by our holy religion. I have approached the holy table, and never did feel so much emotion and delight. I ought to have finished this letter sooner. Must you ever be occupied with me! Me, to whom you have devoted all your life? I have but a few hours to pass thus solitarily. To-morrow's dawn will light up the dearest day of my life; and, in the mean time, I can scarcely think of sleeping. My beating heart requires to be filled with him, with

you, and with the future! and this emotion absorbs all others. O my sister! how much I have still to learn, to be worthy of engaging in the duties of mother of a family, in the sight of Hermacintha! May he, at least, see all my deficiences before to-morrow evening! he must not believe me other than I am.

I hear a noise in the park. It is very late. The game-keepers are going their rounds. I hear a courier! My heart throbs! It can be no other than Julius. He is come. Oh! if I were two days older, with what joy I would run to meet him!

The moon lends her beams to the most beautiful of nights. Adieu, my sister! I shall go try to sleep. The flowers, the spring, the gentle pleasures, friendship and love, surround me with all their soft sensations. My dreams will be agreeable; your image and Julius's will keep me company, and to-

morrow—I shall not be happier than now; that is impossible—but I shall see all my dreams realized among those I love. May you sleep sweetly, Hermacintha! If there is a Heaven, it ought to be hers who possesses the virtues, the purity, and the beauty of angels.

LETTER XVII.

From Hermacintha to Adelaide.

Adelaide, you are certainly unprepared for what this letter is to tell you! Alas! happiness is like a fine day under the dog-star; the heat brings in a storm! —Yesterday evening, we had reached the goal desired; every thing here had assumed the air of festival and joy; I saw about me only contented hearts and happy faces. My good villagers, delivered, by our cares, from the trouble into which they had been thrown by the preparations for war, and the calling out of the militia, had resigned themselves to all their gaiety. Maria, in delirous ecstasy, had made me almost share her sensations. All had succeeded to my wish. Proud of the sacrifice of my life,

I saw it justified by the almost certain happiness of my young friends. Maria, on the evening of that memorable day, had written me a letter, in which her heart and mind were painted in the most vivid colours; and, now, worldly events have come to overwhelm us, in spite of our remote situation, and our seclusion from society! Maria speaks in her letter of a courier which she had heard arrive, and whom she thought must forerun Julius. He came, on the contrary, to defer, for an indefinite time, their marriage, and plunge us into the most well-founded alarms!

When my brother set out for Lisle, we were not affected at his departure, for it was only an affair of a few days. Maria, however, afflicted at the military preparations which were going on around us, and the assembling of troops, betrayed some anxiety. "They talk of war between our country and France," said she. "O sister! if the journey should

prove unfortunate to him!"—"What probability is there?" replied I; "he is not a soldier; and, beside, he will be gone only a week at most; and we know that important affairs like these are long preceded by rumours and negociations." I succeeded thus in dissipating all her womanish fears; but now I find that there was reason for them. Julius sends me word, that his passport is refused; that they have arrested him at his inn, and that if he leaves the place, he will be treated as an emigrant, and all our property confiscated! To conclude, they have written for him to Paris, and he cannot come to us. Maria and I are going to Lisle; and either we shall all return together, or we shall remain with him.

LETTER XVIII.

From the same to the same.

MARIA'S presentiments were but too just. We have arrived at Lisle, and found war declared against our country, and nothing but trouble and dreadful confusion in the city. Julius, though a foreigner, is considered as subject to the military law, called the *requisition*. He is enrolled, whether he will or not, as a soldier, and is to be sent to the Army of the Alps. Our tears, our entreaties, all our efforts, have been useless. What horrible tyranny! What a frightful misfortune is this journey, on the consequences of which I scarcely dare to look! We have no hope but to obtain justice at Paris, by the aid of our relations, the Duke d'Ast and the Count d'Eu. We

are setting out, but Julius is obliged to march in company with a rude and tumultuous assemblage of young men! He goes to fight against the cause of his country, in the lowest ranks, and exposed to all privations! Perhaps we shall obtain some succour through our proceedings at Paris. They allow us, in spite of the war, to return to our own home; but what should we do there, at present? We take the opposite route.

LETTER XIX.

From the same to the same.

BEHOLD us at Paris. All that we have been able to obtain is the rank of officer for Julius, on the same staff with Adolphus. In our misfortune, it is a sort of consolation that he is with his old and only friend. If our government, by way of reprisal, were to force all the French who happen to be in Holland, to serve against their country, Julius would be deprived of that support. But no! such a barbarity will never be committed among us! Meantime, Julius is already gone. Ah! dear Adelaide, how am I to bear my situation? How dare I look into the future? I dare not relate to you what passed at our separation. I was obliged to deceive Maria!

Our ambassador is already recalled. Our relations, as well as he, have been forced to yield to the storm, and to despair of redress for this crying injustice.

Who would have thought that the exercise of so many cares, and so much success in all my efforts, would have finished in sending my poor brother to face a bullet while his life is yet but beginning! It was not to shed another's blood, nor to perish immediately afterward; nor, above all, to fight against his country, that I brought him up. And Maria! Maria! that double idea tears me to pieces; and yet I have taken a great deal on myself. I have dissimulated. Turning the attention of Julius from his affections, I talked to him only of the short duration of the gross mistake under which he has been thus treated; and of the distinction which he has received, in obtaining rank, with the promise of not being sent against his country till the French government shall come

to a decision on his particular case. As to his cousin, I have assured her that I entertained no fears for Julius, that his absence would be short, that he continued to be detained only through the impossibility of making exceptions, without offence to the stupid and furious multitude; and that he would not be engaged in battle. She appeared, at first, to listen to all this, and be patient; but when I came to speak of our departure, and mentioned the day, I had to sustain a scene the most distracting and afflicting of my life. If you consider, Adelaide, that my existence is wrapped up in these two persons, and that I was myself torn by the very griefs which I was employed to dissipate, you will conceive my situation. I pass, I must absolutely pass over the melancholy details of this journey. They had nearly cost me my life. Ah! who, after this, can be mad enough to reckon upon any thing as certain? The only things which are so, are nothingness, fragility,

and illusion in all that concerns us! Inconstancy alone is permanent and durable!

Assured as I am of the purity of the sentiments of my two children, I would have united them before their cruel separation; but Maria could not be prevailed upon to consent. "No, no," said she, "I persuade myself that I am dying: do not unite the living and the dead; it is better to part with life, than to blot that happy day!" There was no means of persuading her; and it was agreed, that Julius should depart on the day following the next, and that we should accompany him as far as Lyons. How long the evening appeared! We sat down sorrowfully to the most dismal of suppers. Before retiring, "My friends," said I, "we have two days to be together; let us not think of the third. Even if we were not obliged to separate in three days, who knows that we shall live till to-morrow?" Never did Julius appear

more tender, amiable, and excellent. When it became necessary to part, I embraced my brother, and required Maria to do as much. "You are promised and betrothed to each other," said I, "and this short separation, which, to others would be nothing, is, to children like you, so great an affair, that you must assist each other as well as possible." What charms in the first kiss of innocent love! I am sure that the heart was every thing in that pure caress!

I led Maria to her chamber, and when she was in bed I left her and returned to my brother. "My brother," I said, "go, since it must be so! But for this, we should not have strength to support your departure, nor you that to bend under imperious necessity." My tenderness and intreaties, employed for the first time and in such circumstances, had their effect upon him. He went, without frown, and yet with a resolution. He obtained a portrait of Maria, my own,

and two bracelets of the hair of each; gifts which I had till then refused him. I remarked on this occasion, what a resource is found in serious circumstances like these, in previous privations, and a reserve of familiar epithets and intimacy: in extremities, they are of real service, and seem a sort of equivalent.

I confess that I passed the greater part of the night in tears. Worn out, at length, I fell asleep; but I had not been long so, when I was suddenly awakened by the noise of my curtains, which were undrawn with violence. I was greatly surprised at the appearance of Maria; the disorder of her dress, her scattered hair, and the agitation of her countenance, rendered her figure even terrifying. Her step faltered, and I had only time to save her. "O mother," said she, "I could not keep away! What will become of us, if he goes without being my husband? Forgive my weakness; I have refused, but I have been wrong. Since

fate commands him to fly his country, he may command his sister and his wife to follow his steps, and to watch over a life upon which our own depend. Make me his wife, and let us go!"—She appeared in too great emotion to listen to reason.—" Dear child, we shall think of this to-morrow. You have need of rest; compose yourself; tears and vexation answer no purpose. Come and sleep with me; to-morrow we will consider what is the best plan to follow." She obeyed, though with reluctance; I talked to her of the sorrows of the villagers, which were increased by their want of fortune, resignation, and knowledge. She finished by falling asleep. As soon as she had closed her eyes, I rang the bell, and gave my orders. An hour or two after, my servant came to awaken me. The morning was very fine, and a carriage ready. I easily induced her to take a drive, and we set out. After some time, she questioned me in regard to Ju-

lius. I eluded a reply. "He is near the moment of departing. Let us go to Madame d'Eu's." The day passed with affected gaiety on my part, and with real sadness on hers. In the evening, I told her that I would pass the night at the château d'Eu, to prepare us for absence, and soon after informed her, that Julius was already at a great distance.

After the first explosion of her grief, I gave her, first, a ring of my brother's hair; next, his portrait. I informed her that he would write daily; that I expected his first letter very shortly, and that I condemned her grief. I began already to talk of his return, and told her, that if the war had not called him away from us, I should have made him go, soon after his marriage, to submit to the last and terrible trial, of absence, time, and travel.

I pretended to wish to prolong my visit to Madame d'Eu, in order that she might desire to return to Paris, in spite

of the absence of Julius. I talked to her with so much pleasure and satisfaction of the places in which we spent our last hours with him, that she begged to set out.

Since our arrival she has been ill, and I am not well. We are in momentary expectation of your betrothed. He is to follow Julius, who was far from pleased to go without his dear Adolphus. They will serve the campaign together, and that is a consolation.

Adelaide! Adelaide! who can divine the future? Who would have told me, a little time ago, that instead of reaching the happiest day of my life, one of the most distressful was about to lead on a train of the cruellest afflictions!

Pity me, my dear Adelaide! Adieu!

LETTER XX.

From Julius to his sister Hermacintha.

My sister, you are obeyed! I am here, in the camp of Lyons, and hence only have I presumed to write to you. But what trouble, strength, and combats has it not required, to keep my word!

I was obliged, at leaving Paris, to change the barrier, and re-tread my steps. I went by the Boulevards, from which I saw your residence. O Hermacintha! where were you and Maria, when Julius, dragged far from you, felt death and night creeping upon his ulcerated heart? A blind and cruel fate forces the most enamoured and most faithful of lovers to absent himself, and to carry into foreign lands a passion which nothing can change, and which has no need of the

trials to which it is going to be submitted.

Alone among the crowd, I go slowly or swiftly, since they force me to do so; but nothing gives me pleasure, nothing entirely fixes my attention. I recognize each individual, each city, each state, by the portraits which you have painted. I see the masks, and I easily guess the real figures. My sister, how can you have so swiftly acquired such an acquaintance with the world and with things? You are very young, and yet I behold in you, reason, truth, and virtue, joined with the graces! What can the world, what can these countries to which you exile me, display, which is comparable to you, which only recall the attentions of my sister during my cruel illness?—that mild solicitude, that soothing voice, in the midst of severest pain? You came to me with a smile, my sister, and my sufferings were suspended. If I slept through lassitude, it

was your look which I saw the last; and, when pain awoke me, it was you whom I found watching beside me. If the most skilful physicians had forgotten an observation or a symptom, it was you whom nothing escaped, and who recalled it to their minds. If I heard of any misfortune caused to others by the want of care, or skill or caution, an involuntary movement made me carry, with my feeble hand, your hand to my lips, and my mute gratitude, unable to exhale itself, returned into my heart, to grow still larger there. O my sister! who has not received from you the same cares, not to speak of our aged parents, whose existence you so prolonged, by tenderness continual and inexhaustible! Maria owes you almost as much as I. The poor bless you; your neighbours, even those whom you do not know, love you; strangers admire you! Hermacintha, be happy, if it is possible to be so without loving. I pardon the insensi-

bility to love, in her who is so perfect in friendship. Maria has at least this advantage. There is no man upon earth worthy of you. You have forbidden me to write to Maria at present. I obey you; but what can you fear from him who has never seen her without emotion, who has never dared approach her lips, nor her virgin robe: from him who was almost overwhelmed with his happiness, when he was permitted to press her to his heart.

I have always known the value of true happiness; I never fancied its existence but in domestic happiness; and I have not changed. If you knew how insensible I am to the most celebrated beauties! True beauty, for me, is that which comes from the soul, and which impresses, animates, and forms the countenance. Maria herself, if she had only her angelic beauty, could not captivate me; but what early understanding, and what principles of rectitude!—she has a voice and looks

which have nothing mortal. Where can we seek for more virtue, gentleness, understanding, and wit? She is an angel; she is, in short, the fancied creature of every moment of my childhood and my early youth. I was faithful to her before I was capable of reasoning, and at present can you believe, that all the glory, the travel, the world; all the Armidas possible, could make me change? No! I know a talisman capable of redeeming me, in spite of all enchantments, from the midst of the greatest brutishness and forgetfulness, if I could ever plunge myself into them; and this talisman is the sweet name of Maria! Tell me, Hermacintha, what passes within me? It seems to me that my eyes grow dim, that a thick veil is fallen before them. If distance and time augment and fortify my love, I feel that since my departure my first reflections have produced a great effect upon me: listen.

My post-chaise stopped on the Boule-

vards. Racked with regrets and grief, I alighted, and seating myself on the grass, I gazed with sadness on the house you inhabited, and which I was about to leave. I felt my head heavy, and lying down on my back on the turf, my eyes fixed on the heavens, which I implored, the immensity and depth of the celestial vault, and the rapidity of the clouds, struck me with a new sensation. The idea of the nothingness of things human came suddenly upon me, and seized my faculties. Struck, for the first time, with this terrible idea, I thought I had discovered a frightful abyss. "What!" said I, "life is but a shadow; it glides away more rapidly than the clouds, driven by the tempestuous winds! Every instant, how short soever, carries away a part of our existence; it passes quicker than the most rapid lightning, for it does not arrive till after its departure: whatever is its promptitude, time always foreruns it. It is a torrent, which flows incessantly,

with a swiftness not to be measured." I felt at this moment an irresistible shuddering. One day I may lose you, Hermacintha!—lose my friend Adolphus!—her! in short, all that attaches me to life! What! one day, we must be separated for ever! I should have sunk under this idea, had I not hoped from Providence, that I should at least precede you! I, who had thought life, if not a thing certain, stable, interminable, at least of prodigious length, I discovered, that it is uncertain and fragile! Whence came it that I had never before made these reflections?—that I had wholly forgotten the sad sentence, *we must die;* that is, must separate for ever? I am full of inquietude. From that moment I have wanted news of you daily; if they fail me I suffer. What a fearful nothingness is life! Ah! tell me, did you also experience this moment of first reflections?

Adolphus does not come, and I am alone, my sister. The campaign is about

to open: of that I am glad, for I cannot endure a residence in great cities.

You desire that I should give you a picture of this new world into which I am suddenly thrown, and I set about to do so, to acquit myself of my charge. I do not pretend, at my age, to judge of a nation; I risk, for you, for you only, my opinion. What will you say of my remarks? Certainly, they will not please you, and yet I am sure you cannot contradict them.

I love actors on the stage, but not those in the world; yet I know not which of the two contain the best and the greatest number. You have deceived me, then, my sister, in making such an eulogium on the men and women of France. I have examined them with attention, and I cannot find those whom you have painted to me so often. Given up to the greatest dissipation, unable to live but out of themselves, the women appear to me to have no interior, and,

so to express myself, to be strangers in their own houses.

I see that folly and hazard governs every head. In reality, the French run in search of amusements with a blindness and fury not unfrequently ridiculous. Their pleasures are no other than motion, and gaiety is their ruling sentiment. They follow the charms, and not the solid and essential of life. They affect great nicety in matters of morals, and yet adultery is no where less shameful; and all who cry out against this state of things, follow, nevertheless, in secret, the example of the rest. Voltaire has said, that their language is a bold beggar, to whom one must give charity against one's will; it may be added, that the nation is a finished coquette, of whom, at the same time, the tone, the language, and pretensions, are of an extreme delicacy, and of which the perpetual contrast is consequently ridiculous. I have seen, at Paris, two

ladies, in the course of one and the same hour, weep and faint at the death-bed of a friend, and set out for a masked ball. I have seen one of the two perish the next day of a burning fever, the dismal effect of her dissipation, and the rage for amusements, the nervous fever, still more mortal than the other; meanwhile, her companion went on as usual. I have seen more than one of those persons, whose lives have for their motto, *short and sweet*, enjoy only an existence full of pain, and always lasting too long. Shows, fashionable promenades, balls, great entertainments, routs, &c. are filled only with actresses, running after entertainments and sights, with as much seriousness, trouble, and toil, as if they were charged with the performance of the task; as if all those whom they found there, were their relations, and members of their family; as if a *home* were not a thing belonging to them. I have seen them play comedy with the dearest af-

fections. I have seen (you will have difficulty to believe it), infants from the cradle, at the doors of masked balls, at three o'clock in the morning, crying for their mothers, and waiting till they should have leisure to quit the scene of disorder, to bring them heated and corrupted milk! And Corinna is of the number of this sort of women! I have seen a Benedict of a husband assist at an entertainment which his wife alone gave at his house, at which three thousand persons were invited, and where the mistress of the house danced a *pas-de-deux* with the first dancer at the Opera, herself playing the tambourine, and dancing, in a curious and malignant crowd. I have seen her, after this, ravished with her pretended triumph, return into her magnificent bedchamber, throw herself upon a sofa opposite the door, which remained open, a crowd pressing round her, to offer her assistance, salts, and strong waters, while she amused herself

with displaying her beautiful hair, and her beautiful naked arms, and contriving a thousand attitudes and contorsions. I have seen her unaccountable husband, at the moment, giving chairs to the lowest ranks of the throng, to enable them the more at ease to sneer at him in regard of his wife, and carry civility so far as to spread, and spread with his own hands, napkins upon the furniture, in order that the spectators might stand upon it, without injuring it, and more readily contemplate his half! They build a theatre, and perform a rhapsody, under the name of a comedy composed by *Madame*, who affects to be surprised. Her children are taken from the nursery, and lowered from the midst of a cloud upon the stage, to procure applause and sottish compliments for their mother.

Oh! how do I not hate these foolish and noisy crowds! People assemble together, without knowing each other,

to smile and grimace, and pry into each other's failings. Deceitful associations, where falsehood and perfidy have so often the sole dominion; where the company neither know how to be silent, nor to be at rest; where I have seen young women, apparently gentle and modest, leave the sides of their mothers, to give themselves up, in separate apartments, to silly and noisy sports, with the most astonishing immodesty. In their forced mirth, I have taken them for lunatics. One may believe, that players, obliged to practise familiarities, in order to represent, upon the boards, others, and not themselves, (tasks imposed upon them by their profession and their necessities), weary of this forced falsehood, are at least natural and unforced at home; but how is it that young ladies please themselves, by seeking happiness in such a stage-play to which nothing compels them? How can they thus im-

pose upon others, and how can they be long themselves the dupes?

I am forcibly struck with the numerous paradoxes in this country. The people are certainly intelligent, but they are too often light and superficial. Their penetration and judgment discover the truth; but their vivacity makes them forget it; and, always ready to do right, always seeking to do the best possible they do right or wrong, as the moment, or as chance decides. The women are wanting in their duties, without being wanting in their principles; and, understanding, as those who resemble Corinna, the language of reason and virtue, I am astonished that they can deceive themselves with so much sincerity, and that actors should be themselves the dupes of the illusion intended for the spectators. I am sure that these women do not see, at the moment, the striking and ridiculous contrast between

their speeches and their actions. I would wager, that they believe themselves, while they are talking, as virtuous as their tongues would speak them.

I see around me an immoderate vivacity in every thing. The pleasures, instead of embellishing life, and rendering it agreeable, and deriving a real consistence from purity of heart and moderation, appear to me to spoil and corrupt all. The French commendably mingle gaiety in their irregular efforts at virtue, but they do not put reason nor moderation into their pleasures. They undertake, they seek, and attempt them, much more than any other people, and feel them really much less. Amusements, diversions, the living out of themselves, being their principal business, they resemble water always boiling, and which is never at rest. They are often, I will even say always, under the empire of illusion. They please themselves;

and, in the general drama of the world, they are the most pleasing actors, and the most the dupes of their own fancy. Our countrymen are men grown; here, let the people have what years they will, they seem, to me, to be always youths.

In respect of arts, sciences, war, and politics, I think them exposed to the same observation. No other people is capable of pushing so far forward, nor of falling so far backward; but, all which they undertake, they do with a celerity and giddiness *inimaginable*, if I may so express myself; and, I conceive, nay, I am forced to allow, that many of the Germans, and of our own countrymen, refuse to grant them that esteem which they receive from you.

If they have a little success in the sciences, the arts, moral philosophy, politics, war, and legislation, they are, at the most, not beyond other nations. The last war, that of the Seven Years, yielded them no great glory; and yet they had

often great successes and great generals. In moral philosophy, politics, legislation, and history, the English, the Germans, and many of our own nation, under several aspects, surpass them.

On whatever side I look at them, I am obliged, in spite of myself, to withdraw from the high opinion which you had led me to entertain. Their historians are only writers of good memoirs. Show me among them a rival of Grotius, of Gibbon, of Hume, &c. But it is principally in relation to poetry, that their inferiority is manifest. Their meagre language cannot raise itself into true poesy, in spite of the trivial and wearisome aid of rhyme. They will never possess, I do not say a Virgil nor a Homer, but a Klopstock.

Their stage, regular, puerile, and tame, exhausts itself on the battered subjects of love, ingratitude, and jealousy ; it appears to me to be very inferior to our own, and, above all, to the immortal

Shakspeare. They are ignorant of the art of exciting strong emotions in the human breast; and that which proves the inferiority of their pieces is, that by the confession of several of their poets, they will not bear translation, though Voltaire has found the means to introduce greater life and motion, and throw more action into his tragedies, to render them less whining and tedious, and bring them nearer to true tragic force. Their Racine has written wonderfully, it must be agreed; but what? eternally jealousies and amorous furors. He understands nothing but declamation, and he writes beautiful poems and bad plays. The Greeks and Romans only seem travestied; and when I have heard them call Achilles, *Prince!* Iphigenia, *Madam!* I have been obliged to leave my place, and struggle with myself not to be overwhelmed by this shocking departure from verisimilitude, joined to that of making the Greeks speak in

rhyme! They have no poets of the first rank; J. J. Rousseau, of whom they boast, was but a good versifier. Télémaque, which they endeavour to pass for a poem, is only a romance, of which it must be acknowledged, that it is a model of fine writing and fine thinking. In short, the immortal Voltaire, the first of their poets, can never be compared with our Vondel, with Schiller, and the Germans.

I shall end with a painful observation; it is, that among the people whom you have painted to me as the fullest of sensibility and benevolence, I discover scarcely any beneficent establishments. I would wager, that notwithstanding the extreme difference between the extent and population of the countries, ours has the greater number. Sister, this says every thing!

LETTER XXI.

From Hermacintha to Julius.

At length, my friend, I see you young, and even a child, for once in your life. I am not sorry for it; I love that each age should have a language and character of its own.

I expected from you a picture of the world, but you have seen it only in miniature or in perspective. In the famous city of Paris, it has been displayed to you in all its brilliance and strength. But young, out of humour, and inexperienced, because you have met with manners other than those at home, because your sister, your cousin, and your country are different, you hasten to pass sentence on a whole nation, and, like a true young man, you take

first appearances for the truth. You write with confidence, as you tell me. So, that in receiving my letter, you will be curious, no doubt, to know how I can contradict or dispute you. Well, my friend! I shall do neither the one nor the other; but what will you say, if I write the eulogium of those whom you have so precipitately condemned? What will you say, if that eulogium naturally springs out of your criticisms, and of all others which foreigners make upon them? You reproach the French with a remarkable vivacity, a passion for extremes, a natural inconstancy, and vicious manners. You say, that there are persons so blind or so unfortunately organized, as to contest with them their superiority in the arts, in literature, history, morals, and even in war. I am older than you, my friend. Listen to my opinion. Examine it with coolness and impartiality; with our Dutch exactitude and calmness; and

renounce an error very excusable in a dejected and love-sick young man, but which would be injurious to his mind, and his improvement, if it lasted long.

You know that my parents took me to travel with them in France, Spain, Italy, and Germany, and that we were to have crossed over into England, when their long and cruel sickness prevented this extension of their design.

I was at first but little edified by the spectacle of France, the French women, and their manners. I saw in the nation, that continual eagerness for novelty, that natural inquietude, that levity, and that delirium, of which we blame, with good reason, the excess. Their vicious manners struck me forcibly. Though I was at a very tender age, I was astonished; I could not have conceived that they possessed that constant eagerness for diversions, amusements, and the means of living out of themselves *(vivre hors de soi.)* I suspected them, at that time,

of some degree of folly. Their minds, said I to myself, are like a convalescent, whose health is not sufficiently strong to allow of his living without aid, and without artificial means. An enthusiast in our literature, in the literature of Germany, and still more in that of England; a witness of the frequent conversations of my parents with the intelligent persons who visited them, I was firmly persuaded that France had not, in proportion with other nations, historians, poets, moralists, nor orators; and, supported by a slight collection of false notions, I formed an opinion, of that country, still more unfavourable than yours. It was not short of the want of national beneficence and sensibility, that I accused them in my little fancy.

The family of Count d'Eu, and that of the Duke d'Ast, allied to ours, received us among them, and secured our admission into the best society. We passed several summers in the most

beautiful parts of Normandy, Bretagne, Burgundy, and the Lyonese. It is from this epoch, my friend, that my character dates its formation, and that my heart has gradually received impressions not to be effaced. Since that time, reflecting on the order which our visits of the several countries were performed, and the continual and minute attention of my parents to the impressions which I received, I have not doubted, that they had it in design to operate in me the very revolution which was produced. I then really beheld, among the greater part of the old French nobility, the most enlightened and the most gallant of all, perhaps that real politeness, that tact, that delicacy, that high breeding, that taste, and, in short, those manners, of which there remain only the tradition. And that proud French honour, more than all, which could supply the place, by itself, of religion, morals, and laws. Never, in their houses, was there fami-

liarity nor rudeness. I know not how they accomplished it, but their behaviour followed the progress of their sentiments toward those who visited them, and, after some time, I was able to discover, on the arrival of fresh strangers, the degree of intimacy and friendship to which they admitted them ; that true *art social*, admirable and natural, which we should search for in vain elsewhere, which results not from calculation nor policy, but from the native movements of a heart of sensibility ; true, delicate, and tempered. Till that time, I had complained, like you, that I was obliged to submit to constraint with the world. What tyranny, said I, to my mother, is that which is exercised upon us ! What ! I am required to disguise myself ! We must, to please in society, renounce, as it were, ourselves, shut up our thoughts, and constrain our movements to conform them to those of the people whom we meet. We must unite ourselves with indifferent persons,

who are not those whom we love and esteem by preference. To please them, we must treat them as our best friends; and seek to win their suffrages, as if our content and joys depended upon the strangers whom chance happened to bring around us! I could never submit to this. I loved the society of my parents, exclusively of my affection for them, because with them I could give the rein to my natural feelings; because I had no need to torment myself with the attempt to avoid what might give an ill idea of me, or rather, what might not give a good one. They knew me, and esteemed me. Sure of the good opinion of all in whom my heart was interested, the rest was not of sufficient importance to disquiet me. It was certainly long before my travels in France, that I had learned to love the society of my parents; but it was there that I was convinced that it was the most agreeable, and the best; that there ought to be no other

than those of our friends; and, in short, that the charm of all society consists in the entire and reciprocal acquaintance with each other's qualities and sentiments, and that esteem and confidence are the true basis.

I discovered, like you, the faults which present themselves on our first arrival in France; but why, after some residence in that country, were my feelings wholly changed? and why did my parents congratulate themselves on my improvement? Observe, my friend, the explanation; it was because, at this latter period, it was really France which I was acquainted with, while, on my arrival, my eyes had fallen on the first passers-by. Julius, this is your case. These pretended French women, whom you accuse, are women who have only some small share of beauty for their whole merit; women, whom shows, amusements, and indolence draw to Paris from every corner of Europe, and who,

far from being the ornament and the representatives of France, are only, on the contrary, the refuse, though they do the honours. When, like me, you shall have penetrated into the interior of estimable families, the peaceable possessors of long inheritances of glory, of probity and merit; when you shall have seen the practice of all the virtues performed in retreat and silence, without pomp, without ostentation or awkwardness, without pedantry, and without artifice; when you shall have seen, in these circles, politeness without falsehood or excess, and the graces without affectation, you will forgive the vanity and high pretensions which sometimes accompany these qualities; and you will think, with me, that the women of France are to other women, what women are to society in general. Lively, full of graces and wit, sensible, without prosing and without pedantry, virtuous, as well by character as by principle, capable of

the greatest and sublimest actions, though naturally prone to an excessive gaiety; such have the French women appeared to me. It was from that I derived the idea of uniting gaiety with the exercise of virtue, and pleasure with the serious things of life; it was there that I became proud of my sex, in which I found a mind at once abounding in charms and understanding, a manner and a carriage gracious and dignified; a *je ne sais quoi*, in short, which distinguishes the women of France from all other women.

You have seen paradoxes and absurdities, you say; and do you know the reason why? It is because you are on earth, and not in the chimerical country of your imagination. In spite of your blindness, look, and you will soon discover, that those who have so much displeased you by their manners, are strangers to France, if not in all cases, at least in a great part of them.

Be not, therefore, so much in haste,

my friend, to judge a country which is, and, perhaps, always will be, the most amiable in Europe. France has been long the first of nations, and Paris the epitome of the world.

I grant, that the two sexes have their faults; a great share of vanity, and an extreme vivacity; but remark, that these defects are derived from their good qualities, and are only excesses. The first are not so striking, only because their institutions and their vicissitudes have never sufficiently combated with or restrained them: in point of fact, they boast of, and even encourage their natural vivacity. To sound morals, which individually they esteem and value, their government attaches scarcely any importance. That which seems to receive most patronage, that which is most in honour at court, is that superficial grace, that levity of tone, that language and conduct, natural to a great part of the nation, which ought to be moderated,

and which, on the contrary, their system renders excessive. Be it true, that the English daily tell their children to sacrifice to the graces: I can conceive it; they are too rough, and sometimes gross; but that they should be seriously studied in France is, doubtlessly, a contradiction. In France, this pursuit should be restrained, or at least not allowed so much importance. Nevertheless, these faults themselves give to the nation qualities which are found no where else, and which will not escape you, if you pay attention. There, the two sexes seem to have made an exchange of their qualities; the men have some of the agreeable points natural to the women, and the latter join to what belongs to them, an energy of a soul, and a solidity of character rare in our sex, and which seems wonderful in persons who, on a first view, appear only quick and light. Nevertheless, you will say, that the manners of the end of the reign of

Lewis XIV, the licentiousness of the regency, and that of the reign of Lewis XV, produced by scandalous women, who had usurped the power of the crown, and all its influence, is no proof of the solidity of French women. Never was there more giddiness in the conduct of affairs, nor inconstancy, false politics, nor scandal, than under the latter reign. Without doubt; and, perhaps, these are misfortunes which swiftly lead to others of a more serious cast; perhaps they are the principal cause of the shock and troubles which begin to be felt. Yet I see, with admiration, a people, said to be essentially imitative and extremely easy to seduce by example, resist the contagion of disorders and follies almost worthy of the Roman emperors. Among these latter, their disorders, or rather their saturnalia, did not overturn the state; the people partook of the manners and faults of the great; here, the mass of the nation

remained untouched; and the sentiments of virtue, honour, and religion, remained the same, in spite of the contagious example of a great part of the higher classes.

Thus, that very people which is accused of inconstancy, is in reality the most difficult to lead into evil, and the most prone to good. What is the solution of this problem? It is that the French have more vivacity and ardour than any other people; that they do not seek the good patiently; must have it on the instant, entire, perfect; and is it in pursuing the best possible, that they often forsake the good, and often change the means, without changing the intention and the end? The French love no surprize but that of pleasure; they turn with ill-humour from an unforeseen misfortune, however slight; obstacles must be smoothed before them, or they must be prepared to meet them before they arrive. But I am persuaded, that if any

nation could one day so form itself as to arrive at all the social perfection which is permitted to man, the French alone would be successful. Their extreme aptitude and vivacity will make them finish the race, while other nations will be dragging on so long, that events and accidents will have time to turn them from the gaol, and prevent their reaching it. You may judge then, my friend, that I am far from participating in your dislike of the French. That which you have remarked among the first who fell in your way, was exaggerated, and disfigured by their follies and their vices; but these follies and vices are those of humanity, and of a small part of this nation; of a smaller number here in Holland, perhaps, than any where else; and the vices are the fault of the social institutions. Their numerous contradictions are the principal cause of the little progress we make in improvement, and the feeble results of our acquirements of which

what follows affords the proof. Strangers do not dispute with us the reputation of possessing, above any other people, domestic comforts and domestic happiness. They uniformly attribute the cause to our coldness and to indolence or natural inertia; but you and I know that they are deceived. I believe that we are as loving as in other climates; but I am very sure that nowhere can they love better. If, then, the advantage which they observe in us does not come from our coldness and apathy, whence does it really come? I believe that our customs contribute greatly; we have few idle persons; we have a house for our abode, and a family to visit in preference to every other; and hence we are occupied, retired within ourselves, and reserved. But how would you arrive at similar results through opposite customs? How can nations which swarm with idlers, whom they honour, feast, and often ridiculously admire, preserve

order? How can it be otherwise than that the number of triflers should continually increase? How, more than all, can they remain at rest, and not abuse the influence so unjustly acquired, and so ill-founded? How can creatures whose whole occupation, and whose existence, has no other object than the satisfaction of endless desires, preserve the least moderation, the least regularity, the least principle of honesty, in their conduct? It is as if you required, that a house, always open to the emanations of the atmosphere, should receive only the good, and reject the bad. If you would banish idleness, if you would inflict equal punishment upon robbers, assassins, seducers, libertines, and professors of libertinism, all those, in a word, who make a sport of the sufferings and misfortunes of their dupes and victims, there would result an amelioration, perhaps, greater than we are able to imagine. But what contrasts to this do we not find in

society! We punish with the galleys and with infamy, and sometimes with death, the wretch whom famine and want drive to steal that of which others have in such abundance, and which is necessary to his subsistence; while the young idler, who seduces another's wife, or an innocent girl, and often causes the dishonour, the misery, and the death of the most worthy persons, so far from being still more severely punished, is honoured, cherished, and invited into company! These contradictions, without doubt, are more frequent in France than with us; but that which proves that France possesses a great fund of morals and solidity, is, that they have been so long resisted. Every where, men love better to punish faults, than to prevent them by fighting with vices and corruption, and by cutting off their growth; they employ themselves in remedying an apparent evil; but they neglect to go

to its source, though it is so well known, and so well established.

In Spain and Italy, alas! my heart is wrung in finding no where, or very rarely, a respectable household, a family happy through its morals and virtues, disdaining the false pleasures and brilliant vices, *with knowledge of the cause*. In Spain, I have seen dissolution of manners in the mass of the whole nation. Endowed with an ardent temperament, the Spaniards are governed by their senses; and this influence is so entirely exterior, that it never seems to come from the heart. The Spaniard is thought sentimental and languishing, and he may be so in the parts of the country which I have not visited; but for myself, I have seen nothing but a complete dissoluteness, scarcely remarked or felt in the country. Meantime, in criticizing the manners of that nation, I am very far from shutting my eyes on the energy

and loyalty which distinguish it*; and which, perhaps, are always the most found where men have degenerated the least from their primitive character.

Italy has appeared to me to hold the middle place between Spain and France; the women are more delicate than those of Spain, and yield, in spite, as it were, of themselves, to the malign influence of their climate.

The women of France, accustomed to a sky as moderate as their passions, more gay, more elegant, more free from the dominion of exterior influences, have appeared to me, if not the perfection of women, at least the best that I have seen. It would be too long to recount to you all the heroines of friendship, and voluntary victims to their duties, whom I have known.

The German women have seemed to me the deepest thinkers, and the best informed of all, but cold and systematic: their

mind and character approaches more to that of the men, from whose society they live more separate. I have thought that even those addicted to the pleasures of the world introduce a peculiar regularity and perseverance into their conduct.

The Spanish women are more fiery and licentious than the Italian; but the latter have more real sensibility. The German women are the most reasonable; the French the most delicate, and our Dutch women the most solid and unaffected. Furious, but momentary passions are endemic in Spain; in Italy, love is more truly felt; in Germany it has less libertinism; in France it is most amiable; in Holland, most peaceful and most happy. Our Dutch women are, perhaps, inferior to others in *refined* and engaging manners, but they are superior in the qualities essential to the happiness of their husbands. Naturally calm, and yet affectionate, they carry their under-

standing in their hearts, and their judgment is of a perfect solidity.

"You think that the French are always too young. "It seems," you say, "that my fellow-countrymen are men of mature age; but the French of all ages appear to be always youths." This it is true; France affords, perhaps, more old men acting the part of young ones, still gay and amorous; and love, still more than elsewhere, is the important concern of life. The reason is, that the heart is always young; and the French being those who of all others have the greatest share of it, they remain the longest young. If their vivacity were constrained within just bounds; if good morals were, I do not say more diffused, for they are well diffused already, but if they were of greater influence, that is to say, better placed; if the false pleasures were less honoured; if this excrescence of life and strength were better employed, the brilliant youth would soon ar-

rive at mature manhood, pressing on to all the perfection permitted on this earth.

As to other reproaches, consider what they were, and what they are; and from whatever side you look at them, you will seem the first in rank.

Considered in a military view, are they not the descendants of those Gauls who resisted the Romans, beat the conquerors of the earth, and burnt the Capitol?

Are they not that people, which, the first, has most advanced civilization since the period of the middle ages? They are deficient, you say, as politicians, moralists, and legislators; or, at least, those of other nations are their superiors. Young misanthrope! take a little time for reflection, and then tell me, which is the nation that has incessantly aggrandized, improved, and civilized itself, for a series of fourteen hundred years? Which is the country, that

during the same period, has lived almost under the same government? which is the country, that neither licentiousness, nor irreligion, nor bad morals, have been able to destroy? They have no moral writers! It follows that neither Nicole, nor Pascal, nor Bayle, nor La Fontaine, nor Montaigne, nor La Rochefoucault, nor La Bruyère, nor Molière, were Frenchmen! They have no historians! Pardon, immortal Bossuet! thou, who, in unrolling to our eyes the succession of empires, hast spoken in the wisdom and the voice of Providence; pardon! My young brother had forgotten thee, when he dared to pronounce the word! Forgive him, also, sublime Montesquieu, Mably, Voltaire, Rollin, Vertot, Saint-Réal, Hénault, artless Joinville, wise Sully, and many other illustrious writers! They have no orators, you say, further; and their language, therefore, is little adapted to eloquence! Look into Buffon; look into J. J. Rousseau; the first pages you cast

your eyes on give a sufficient answer. Look also into Masillon, Fléchier, Fénélon, Bourdaloue, and if your lips still persist in your judgment, it is because they do not agree with your heart. They have no poets! Thus Racine, Corneille, La Fontaine, Molière, J. J. Rousseau, Quinault, and Voltaire, were not poets! Blind Julius, did you never read the Odes Sacrées, nor Esther, nor Athalie? If this is the case, what enthusiasm will not an acquaintance with them excite in you? How admirable is the illusion which they produce, and which has transported me into the very places of the personages themselves! What an assemblage of images, at once vivid and noble; of thoughts equally forcible and just! The divine Télémaque is not a poem, you say. Well, I agree, that it is not equal to the Iliad. The French, no more than other nations, have produced a Homer nor a Virgil. The Italians have alone found one in Tasso,

and the English, perhaps, in Milton; though, in the sublime work of the latter, there is not, what, in my estimation, constitutes an epic poem, variety of character, and a principal hero. We have had none in Holland, and it is the same with Germany, notwithstanding their Messiad. The Télémaque appears to me nearer Homer than the Messiad, or than Camoens, &c. I say nothing of the Henriade; it is a title of glory only for Voltaire. The marvellous, the interesting, inspiration, sentiment, and moral, all are wanting to it; and such a production cannot be the divine work which is called a poem, which must be inspired by a superior intelligence, competent under every aspect, and in all parts. My admiration for the immortal Homer is such, that Virgil appears to me only his imitator. I find nothing beautiful in the Æneid, which had not previously existed in the Iliad in the sublime.

Their poets, according to the Germans and the Hellenists, cannot sustain verse in rhyme; verse like this is not verse; and yet they refuse the title of poem to the Télémaque, because it is not written in French verse! The greatest blindness of the enemies of the French language appears in their criticisms on the stage. At the conclusion of our travels, my opinion on French literature was much changed. I was astonished to hear Voltaire raised above Racine, and the French theatre spoken of with contempt, accused of monotony, langour, insipidity, and affectation. Racine, to listen to the critics, is destitute of that admirable regularity, that strength of sentiment, that charm of style, that perfect knowledge of the human heart, which incessantly enchant us. He is accused of insipidity, of having always and solely resorted to love for the incidents of his plays, and of occupying himself entirely with that

subject. But is not love the base and foundation of the human heart? Is it not, whatever the philosophers may say to the contrary, the great history, the great business of human life? In treating on this subject so frequently, has Racine failed to stamp with their just lineaments the principal personage of the plot? Is not their language the language of nature? As for me, when I read *Iphigénie*, it is Homer whom I hear in the parts of Achilles, Agamemnon, and Clytemnestra; in that of Mithridates in the tragedy of that name; Orestes, in Andromache. In *Athalie* it is reason and truth which speak by Racine. It is the haughty Romans, and the great men of the most brilliant period of their history, whose voices Corneille enables us to hear. Never tell me, then, that you have read without emotion and delight, the divine poem of *Esther?* What a deplorable want of judgment and taste!—Voltaire is praised for his defects; the

preference which is given him is founded upon them. But may we contradict a whole nation in its decision, and the preference which it is more competent than any other to bestow upon its own writers? The art which Voltaire introduces into his tragedies, the legerdemain of *Mahomet*, the ghosts of *Semiramis*, &c. is what is preferred in Germany; be it so; but, at the same time, why dispute with the French, what even the Greeks and Romans were unable to do, the possession of a theatre, the most beautiful, the most regular, the most grand, and, in a word, the most complete, which has ever existed?

But a longer discussion would carry me too far. Return, Julius, from your prejudices; I foretell that your opinions will soon change. I shall conclude with a last observation on the judgment of the new Zoiluses. They praise every thing in Voltaire: they are enthusiastic for him, while they reproach Racine with a departure from costume. The are indig-

nant at the qualifications of *Prince*, *Madame*, and *Seigneur*, given to Achilles, Agamemnon, Orestes, &c.* "It is a want of verisimilitude," say they; and it is still worse to make the Greeks and Latins speak in rhyme; it is a shocking fault, which the learned, the Hellenists, the friends of antiquity, are unable to bear with!—The puerility and falsity of this petty criticism ought to show how much the French theatre and Racine are above the attacks of these pretended Aristarchuses.

In reality, we must conclude, from their last observations, that the French poets, to present their fellow-countrymen with Greek subjects, ought to have written in a language which nobody in the French pit understands: for the want of verisimilitude is far more shocking, when the Grecian heroes are made to speak a language which did not exist in their time, than when titles are given them which, it is true, they had not, but

which convey to us their true rank and situation. No difficulty is made as to the striking want of verisimilitude in frequent instances in the tragedies of Voltaire, and which do not consist in words, but in the character and sentiments of persons and of whole plays; such, for example, as the Voltarian philosophy of Zaira, at the commencement of the piece, and her fervour and more than scrupulous discretion at the end. To Voltaire, one of the first, but not the first of French poets, one may apply the reproach, of having exhibited himself more frequently than his personages; of putting into their mouths opinions and language as foreign to the character, to the country, and to the manners of the age, as to the subject of the piece; but Racine and Corneille have been able to discover all the secrets, and all the folds of the human heart. They have been more successful than any other modern writers, and almost equal

to Homer, Thucydides, Livy, and Tacitus, in giving words to Greeks and Romans. Prejudice and partiality not being able to set up a real justification of the complaints made against the French language and poetry, have seized upon one poet, and made him the object of a dissimulating and false enthusiasm, as a proof of their indulgence, or at least of their impartial criticism. It is thus that women, false and dissimulating in their rivalry and jealousy, never fail to praise a rival for virtues which she has not, in order to dispute those which she has, that so they may hide these latter from the view of others; well convinced, that as her faults will not escape censure, their false eulogies will give no influence nor profit to their rival.

It happens sometimes, that the French support ridiculous opinions before strangers to try them, and ascertain the solidity of their judgment; and on these occasions, it is by suffering them to pro-

ceed in their exposition of erroneous opinions that they practise upon simple and too confident minds, a raillery of the most cruel kind, and at the same time the most delicate and poignant. In short, my friend, remember what France was under Lewis XIV ; assure yourself that that epoch, memorable for all Europe, owed every thing to the French language, and to that glorious nation ; and retrograde from the false sentence you have uttered. I admire how your unjust instinct has directed you to pass in silence over the sciences and fine arts. Nevertheless, the country of Descartes, of Pascal, and Lavoisier, the cradle of the mathematics and of chemistry, is able to furnish you, under many aspects, with deeper errors still. What a nation is that with which you are so little acquainted, and through which, after the memorable age of Lewis XIV, we see the dawn of one still more brilliant, perhaps, in relation to the sciences and arts!

The mathematics take an extraordinary flight under the meditations of Lagrange; Laplace completes the Newtonian system; Lavoisier creates chemistry ; and the fine arts, under Vieu, open a school which is worthy of Athens. Allow then, dear Julius, that placed upon the most favourable soil, endowed with qualities the most amiable, the most solid, and the most in harmony with its situation, the French is, of all nations, the first for grandeur, renown, and human perfection, as ours is for happiness. In fact, our Huyghens, Boërhave, Erasmus, Grotius, Vandyk, Rubens, Vandervelden, &c. may at least contest the palm of superiority. Guillaume, Maurice, Frederick-Henry de Ruyter, and Van Rossen, may be cited among the most famous captains ; but you are too unjust and too partial for me not to be the same in my reply, and all my vengeance will be, to see you soon disown your haughty

observations, and blame your excessive patriotism and *Dutchism*.

As to the beneficence of the French character, I believe that men are every where the same. There can be no real difference, except between individuals; there is none between nation and nation. And if we are determined to investigate the existence of beneficence in France, perhaps we shall find it under a form less ostentatious, more generous, more delicate, and more liberal, in the manner of its exercise.

LETTER XXII.

Adolphus to Julius.

WHAT a happiness, my friend! we shall perform the campaign together; I am not without some feelings of joy. Though a soldier for some time past, I have never yet seen service, and that reflection gives me pain; I shall not be displeased, therefore, to begin at last.

I left Adelaide at the very moment of our marriage; I was annoyed for a few days; but, on cool reflection, perhaps it is fortunate that it happened so. To renounce the world so young, become sedentary, and be married! No! I prefer to travel, ramble, fight, make conquests of all kinds, and be able to recount them to my children in my old age. There must be a secret charm, my friend,

in the *uncertain and independent life of a soldier in time of war.* Without this, how is it that we prefer a vagabond life, in which we fatigue our bodies, our mind, and senses, without very well knowing for what purpose? Perhaps, absolute independence is part of our nature and every thing, which leads us back to our primitive destination, pleases and attaches us in spite of ourselves. But since, in writing to you, I take up a serious tone, what I say must be useful, and more directly interesting to yourself.

Scarcely had I heard news of you and your precipitate departure, when, leaving the preparations for my marriage, I set out. I arrived at Paris, at your sister's, only the next day but one after your departure. They had returned in the night from the château d'Eu, and, to appearance, they had not met with joys and pleasures; for never, in my life, did I ever see so much

sadness, nor such complete changes. As soon as the ladies were visible, they received me; Hermacintha gaily, and Maria with a seriousness which might excite alarm. Poor girl! she had been crying much: for her beautiful eyelids were red and humid. By the advice of Hermacintha, I renounced the hope of rejoining you before your arrival at Lyons. They had commissions to give me. I wandered in the beautiful gardens of the Count, reading the various inscriptions which they contain, and thus I reached the Belvidere, in which Hermacintha was alone. She fixed her eyes with attention on a bouquet of roses and violets. I stood by in silence. Under the flowers, I read these words, and recognised your hand-writing: "I shall be far from you when you see these flowers, but my heart and my thoughts will not have left you." "Dear brother," said Hermacintha, "behold thee launched into this perfidious world, into

this eternal whirlwind; what dangers do you not run? what moments of repose or pleasure canst thou enjoy, far from all that belong to you. Ah! come back quickly, if thou wouldst find us."

Presently after, I heard behind me steps like those of the young fawn or timid doe. It was Maria, who was come to join Hermacintha. I, also, entered the pavilion, and your sister, whom I had surprized in a state of complete emotion, seeing your cousin, immediately assumed her cheerful air, and presented her with half her flowers. "Is not my bouquet pretty?" said she, "take half of it;" and she fixed it herself on Maria's breast.

In the evening, your cousin was very sad; she contemplated with a melancholy indifference a sunset the most glorious possible; she sighed, and seemed, as it were, to say, "How beautiful it would be, if he were here!" She was picking the leaves from her bou-

quet, when Hermacintha addressed her in these words: "Look at what I found beneath these flowers, which was placed, the day before yesterday in the Belvidere! How fresh they have kept!"—Maria, recognizing your hand-writing, and carefully placing the bouquet in her bosom, affectionately embraced Hermacintha.

J shall bring you two presents; one from your sister, and the other from Maria. I shall not tell you what they are.

I must remain here a few days in spite of myself. My family insists upon it, and especially my aunt. It is a great pity to leave Paris. You would not imagine that my extravagant folly at Amsterdam could have given me such a reputation among the women of fashion, that every one insists on seeing me. Truly, if I were as much of a fool as you call me, my head would go round. Even Corinna herself treats me with a courtesy which is little natural to her.

I should have been able to forgive her our disagreements, if she had not undertaken to tell me a frightful scandal of you. We quarrel incessantly; she is a woman, and what would you have me do? *See her speak*, as was well said by a wit, of his wife, who was equally beautiful and silly.

I must inform you, however, of the charge which she brings against you. Who would do this but myself? If it is well founded, you will correct it, and justify yourself in my eyes; if it is not, you will learn to form a better judgment of the line of conduct which you ought to hold in the world. The censure will teach you to be either more reserved, or more mistrustful.

"Your friend," said she, "has not made a conquest of me, and I know not whether I have of him; he is taciturn, and seems to hold every body in disdain. He is a true Dutchman, and thinks more than he lives. He dances but in-

differently, laughs little, and enters with no spirit into pleasures: he is a dismal young man. I had some singular conversations with him. He asked me for the definition of coquetry. *Excite and leave*, replied I, giddily, and without thinking much of what I said. Conceive, that he was queer enough to write down my answer on his tablets! I confess, however, that he has a quickness of wit. I asked him, in what consisted happiness; he was unable to give me an answer; but, when I told him that I loved a life short and good, and that that was my motto, "I love only the good," was his answer.*

* "Une vie courte et bonne."—We say, in English, "short and *sweet*," or, "a short life and a *merry* one."—"Short and *good*" possesses, in English, rather an opposite signification. For this reason, in a former page, where the author has already mentioned the "motto" of "une vie courte et bonne," the translator has rendered it by "short and *sweet*." Here, to meet the force of Julius's reply, it must necessarily stand "short and *good*;" but this latter expression is not English.—Tr.

Corinna is not fond of you. She has read, through a singular accident, the letter you wrote to me concerning her, and you need inquire no further. Beside, there are also heads of schools and sects among pretty women; and those who follow other maxims than theirs, become exposed to their enmity, just in proportion to their merits and reputation. I did not believe this formerly, but I am convinced of it now.

You remember that dear friend of Corinna's, who followed her into Holland. The moist and foggy air did not agree with her, and was even fatal; she is dead; and Corinna, Corinna runs after balls and pleasures as if her friend had not been long her inseparable companion! But I am wrong; she is deeply sensible of the loss of her whom she calls her friend. With the same hand with which she had just supported herself on her partner, while she made a brilliant *pirouette* in the dance, I saw her wipe away a tear just ready to wet her eyelid.

I am just setting out. I fear that I shall not overtake you before you reach Italy, on account of the quickness with which you travel; and I have availed myself of a courier of government, to announce to Achilles that his faithful Patroclus follows him. Adieu.

LETTER XXIII.

Julius to Hermacintha.

ALREADY, we have been present at several affairs, and, among others, at the passage of the Echelles, the sanguinary battles of the 11th and 17th, and at last, in the taking of Chambéri.

Be at ease on my account. I am calm in the sight of danger. I take care of a life to which your's and Maria's is attached. I have a heart made to love, to know the value of Maria, my incomparable sister, and Adolphus! If you knew how much I owe him! how much I love him! In considering what I feel for him and for her, I think that love is only true friendship between persons of different sexes.

Adolphus has distinguished himself

on several occasions. I owe him my life, and the happiness of having saved a young lady.

At the taking of Chambéri, a party of grenadiers were sent with axes and other instruments to force the gates of the town. We went with them on horseback, under the fire of all the musketry from the ramparts; but as soon as the gate was opened, both the soldiery and inhabitants dispersed. We pursued them. I brought down several, and, among others, one, who, of large stature and great strength, and of a ferocious aspect, had already killed two grenadiers in his flight. He was armed with a double-barrelled piece, and a pair of pistols. After re-charging his gun, he was about to sacrifice new victims, with so much the more facility, as the little troop of grenadiers were confining their attention, on one side of the town, to the mass of our brave enemies. Alone, on his side, he fired on the stragglers, and fled from

house to house. As Adolphus had lost sight of me, he was looking for me, and I perceived him engaged in an attack on this man, who was going to reload. The latter, who, at first, had fled, was now returned. Seeing me alone, he fired on me, and missed; for he had not had time to take a good aim. I cut him down with a blow of my sabre; but, in spite of his wound, he threw his musquet at me in a rage, laid violent hold on the reins of my horse, and discharged one of his pistols at me, while he held the other between his teeth. Fortunately, the ball only grazed my breast, and I succeeded in making him let go his hold. Mean time, fatigued with the struggle, I felt that he would have the advantage of me; for, as my strength grew less, his seemed to increase. I was about to become his prey, when a piercing shriek struck my ear, and my adversary fell at my feet. It was Adolphus, who, seeing my difficulty, had

seized the musket of a grenadier, to effect my deliverance. My antagonist was not dead, and the grenadiers, on coming up with us, enraged against him were about to destroy him; but I succeeded in getting him placed on a litter, and carried to a place of safety.

Adolphus had scarcely come to my assistance, when the whole army entered the place. What a painful sensation I then experienced, my sister! On a flight of steps before a neighbouring house, I saw a beautiful youg female, who tore her hair in desperation, beat her breast—the most beautiful breast in the world—and accused me of having murdered her father! She endeavoured to descend, and run in advance of the troops; but, not having the strength, she remained on her knees on the steps, and filled the air with her cries. A few minutes after, the soldiers were permitted to commence the pillage. An infuriated troop rushed toward her, and

dragged her into the house, where they were ravaging every thing. We followed with the crowd, and succeeded, with great difficulty, and after having given and received more than one blow of the sabre, in tearing the young female from the hands of the soldiers. I threw my mantle over her shoulders, gave her my arm, and led her to head-quarters, where a chamber was always reserved for us. I gave her in charge to my old huntsman, and we returned to our duty.

Some hours after, Adolphus left me, and I returned to the lady. I was greatly surprized at my reception. Having placed herself near a lofty window, "Approach me not," she exclaimed; "it is not enough to be the assassin of my father and my whole family, but you would lay upon me your hands covered with my father's blood. No, I know how to deliver myself!" Saying these words, she would have thrown herself out of the window, but seeing beneath

only soldiers who were laughing brutally at her distress, "Alas!" added she, "they are every where;" and fell back on the carpet, in a fainting fit. I took care of her for several hours. I succeeded in composing her spirits, in prevailing on her to listen to me, and in completely restoring her confidence; but I saw myself under the necessity of saving her a second time from the attempts of my comrades. It was not without difficulty, and one of them received, as he deserved, my sword through his body.

As I was ordered to go on a commission to St. Jean de Maurienne, I determined on carrying my young charge to that village, or to such château as she might chuse on the road. Her name is Sophia; her family seemed in good circumstances, and I imagined that she must have relations in the neighbourhood. I learned that her maternal grandmother lived at St. Jean de Maurienne; that they had inhabited Savoy only for

the last two years, and proposed returning home to Verceil, in Piedmont, their ordinary place of residence. I sent for horses, and a post-chaise, and having taken my instructions, I returned to the room in which I had left Sophia, covered her with my mantle, and, taking her arm, led her through the crowd at head-quarters to the chaise. The thoughtless were malignant enough to misinterpret what I did, laughing, and attempting to rob me of what they called my fair conquest. Exasperated at length at their impertinence, so much the more, as Sophia, through terror, began to lose her strength, and I had difficulty in sustaining her, I drew my sabre, and struck the most troublesome of the groupe, and who had followed me the last. His wound was slight, but it put an end to all opposition; meanwhile, it will cost us a second affair, without doubt.

I reached St. Jean de Maurienne, and, as soon as Sophia was deposited with her

grand-mama, I was obliged to leave her. My orders were to follow the general, who was in position near this place. Notwithstanding the warmest and most sincere intreaties, I was obliged to leave her. I was glad of this. The service I had rendered her was nothing extraordinary, and I feared that reflection might recall to her mind, that I was the murderer of her father, and the repugnance she had originally felt. I promised to see her again, as soon as I had delivered my dispatches. Unfortunately, they contained an order to the general to leave the place immediately, and make an attack. I was, therefore, obliged to renounce my intention of visiting Sophia again.

END OF VOL. I.

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